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LIFE AND TIMES

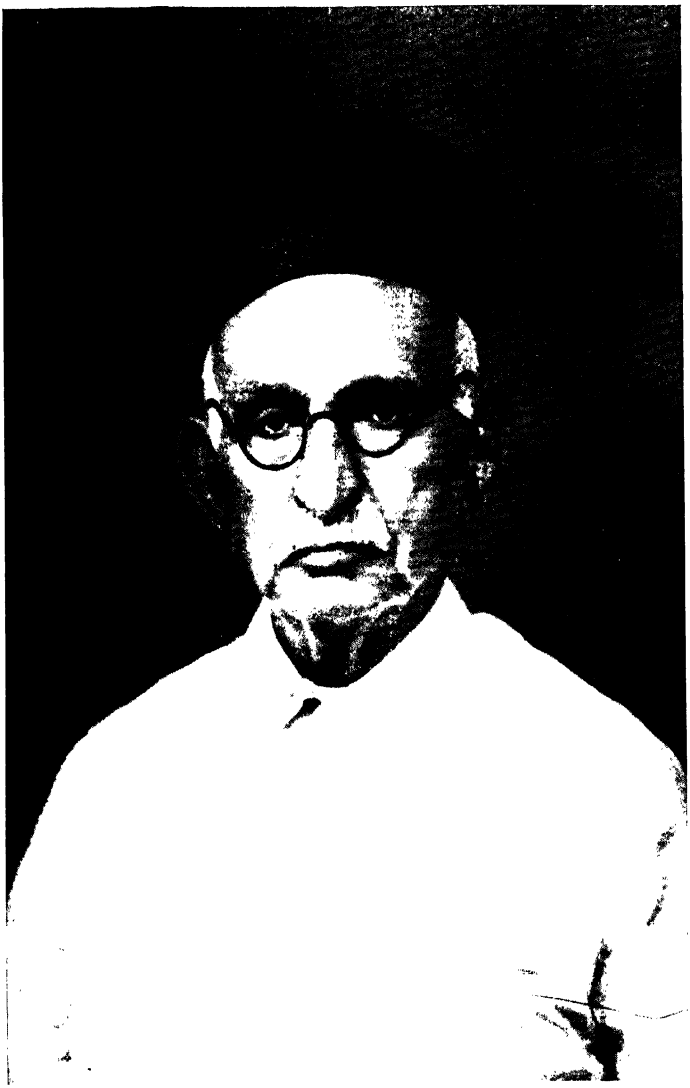
OF

Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw,

KT., O.B.E., M.V.O.

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LIFE AND TIMES

OF

Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw,

KT., O.B.E., M.V.O.

BY

A. N. JOSHI, B.A., LL.B.

Advocate, High Court. Bombay

BOMBAY :

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Dr. Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad, K.C.I.E., LL.D.

FOREWORD

BY

DR. SIR CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD,

K.C.I.E., LL.D.

I have much pleasure in writing this Foreword to the life of Sir Hormusjee Cowasjee Dinshaw, an excellent volume so ably written by Mr. A. N. Joshi, B.A., LL.B., an Advocate of the Bombay High Court.

Sir Hormusjee, who is a well-known figure in his community, is the head of the Adenwalla family which has for some generations made a great name as merchants and financiers at Aden and Bombay. The history of their rise from poverty to affluence makes very instructive reading. The kindness and courtesy of the Adenwallas are proverbial and Indians travelling between India and Europe can never forget the great hospitality that has always been extended to them by Sir Hormusjee and his family whenever they pass through Aden.

Sir Hormusjee is a very unassuming, kind and liberal gentleman and he has always extended his

helping hand to all objects of public usefulness. His silent charity to people of his own community as well as of other communities is well-known in Bombay. For his philanthropy and other acts of public utility he has made himself very popular not only in Aden and Bombay but in other parts of the Presidency as well. A detailed biography therefore of such a personality will be welcomed by the public.

CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD

BOMBAY, 10*th June*, 1939.



Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy, J. P.,
The Author of the 'Introduction'

INTRODUCTION

BY

MR. J. R. B. JEEJEEBHOY

Those miserable sons of distressed humanity, steeped in the mire of dejection and despair, from whom fortune has turned away her smiling face and hope and desire have long ceased to cheer their onward path, and whose fancy invariably plays the self-tormentor, may read with pleasure and advantage the edifying life story of the Adenwalla family, a biography which will teach them how industry, enterprise and patience will defy the frowns of fortune and lead a penniless but an adventurous and pushing man of dauntless courage on to the paths of prosperity and elevate him to an honourable position in life. It is written by Mr. Ambelal Naranjee Joshi, an Advocate of the Bombay High Court, a Hindu whose knowledge of the ancient history of the Parsees, strange to say, might well put to the flush many a scholar belonging to the Parsee community.

Mr. Joshi is a student of Parsee theology, Parsee culture and Parsee history and has quenched his thirst for knowledge from the fountain of old Zoroastrian literature. He reads, he digests and he thinks and his admiration for this community reaches a high level of appreciative acknowledg-

ment. He is a lawyer by profession but has turned his back upon the allurements and temptations of a rising pile which an exclusive and devoted practice of this high calling offers to its votary, and has spared time and energy for literature and philosophy as a relaxation from the fatigues of his legal duties.

Born at Palsana, a village in the vicinity of Udwada, the chief religious centre of the Parsees, educated in a Parsee institution, brought up under the fostering care of a Parsee headmaster, a great disciplinarian who held to him the torch of knowledge and enlightenment, in fact reared in a purely Parsee atmosphere, Ambelal Joshi, except for his religious persuasions, is in all respects a Parsee amongst Parsees. He once confessed to me candidly that he owed his present position entirely to their enlightened, progressive and cultured influence. He has, therefore, a warm corner in him for the followers of Zoroaster and experiences all that romantic flutter of the heart when he reads of Parsee exploits and Parsee achievements. Such is his love and admiration for the ancient people of Iran, the descendants of Jamshed and Noshirwan.

He is attracted towards them not because he is enamoured of their romantic past but because he adores their religion, so practical and pure, because he is an admirer of their cleanliness, in dress and in heart, because of their liberal views, in politics and philanthropy, because of their social and affable

manners and lastly because of their universal adaptability, the strangeness vanishing before their accommodating temperament. Mr. Joshi has on his hands the compilation of a book on Zoroaster and Firdausi, he has great respect and reverence for the Parsees' past, for their just and valiant Emperors, for their historical dynasties and for the great epic the Shah Nameh, one of the sublimest products of human genius.

In short Mr. Joshi is a lawyer, a historian, a writer of historical short stories, an essayist, a dramatist, a critical student of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as of English literature and comparative politics, is versed in international and constitutional laws and is a critic and authority on the Indian theatre. He is also a great connoisseur of art, music and painting. Moreover, he is an eloquent speaker in Gujarati and English and claims some of the enlightened and influential Parsees amongst his best personal friends. He is a delightful conversationalist and being a versatile man conversation with him is indeed an intellectual entertainment. He had made an excursion or two into political literature but now lives in the comparatively calmer atmosphere of law and classics.

Such are in short the credentials of the learned author of this volume, a promising young man, sincere, sound and ultra modern in his out-look on life, a man who has displayed his ability as a scholar and biographer and has placed before us a work

which traces as it were, the making of an oak tree from a tiny acorn, and is replete with interesting episodes of a highly educative value.

Coming now to the life-sketch of Cowasjee Dinshaw, the founder of the family, it is, as mentioned above, both instructive and enlightening. To be born of very humble parents devoid of the means to feed or educate their children, to begin life as a compositor on a paltry salary of three Rupees per month in a printing-press and then after undergoing a salutary training in the school of adversity, to leave one's native shores for fresh fields and pastures new, to amass a decent fortune by dint of labour and rectitude and to utilise that fortune for the amelioration of one's fellow-men by the establishment of institutions of public utility, and in spite of affluence and power to live a simple and blameless life,—these are achievements which do not fall to the lot of an ordinary individual. It is the result of the cultivation of the highest and noblest qualities in human nature, it is the result of toil and patience, the result of putting to practical use the inherent spirit, adventurous and enterprising, of the Parsees, who had in the good old times the gift of discerning with the keen glance of genius what their contemporaries with all their experiences and resources were unable to perceive.

The goddess of Fortune favoured Cowasjee from the beginning of his career and she received him with open arms on the shores of Aden. When

he landed there the port was barren and desolate. There were no modern roads, no gas, no electricity, the last two conveniences had not yet come in vogue in those days, no fine buildings which it possesses to-day, no floating docks, in fact, it was devoid of all modern comforts devised by the inventive genius of man. Cowasjee indeed proved himself to be the maker of modern Aden. To compare great things with small, what Washington was to America, what William Tell was to Switzerland, what Ito was to Japan, Cowasjee was to the city of Aden. He did all he could to improve the amenities of the place, imported from Europe at great cost machinery for the manufacture of ice, potable water and salt, encouraged the spread of education and in a few years' time built up there a large trade, his sphere of business activities extending not only over Aden but over distant lands such as Zanzibar, Hodeidah, Djibouti, Mombassa and the Somali coast. To crown all these, he cultivated philanthropy as an inseparable accompaniment and founded religious institutions, dispensaries, libraries and proved himself a veritable patron to the poor and the needy.

If, as mentioned by a great author, man's happiness is measured in proportion to his virtues and his riches in proportion to his liberalities, Cowasjee was indeed a very happy and an affluent individual. As the volume of his trading operations increased he imported to the shores of Arabia more and more hands, especially Parsees, to look after his expanding business and thus he took delight in affording

service to hundreds of Parsee youths with whose co-operation was transformed this arid waste of Arabia into one of the most important ports of the British Empire. His industry, foresight and generous nature made him one of the outstanding personalities of his time. Many public men have achieved greater honours whilst others far less worthy have been acclaimed as public benefactors. But their reputation does not generally survive their demise. Long after they have been forgotten will Cowasjee's fame live on in many a broad-minded act of benevolence, in many a kindly and generous deed. The sun of his life set in a blaze of glory in the beginning of this century and when death claimed him as its own he had reached that elevated position occupied by those regarding whom all speak with expressions of respect and gratitude for deeds of benevolence done in this world. He rose from the lowest rung of the ladder by sheer ability, industry, enterprise, probity and initiative, attained a high reputation for himself and his family by acquiring a large fortune and by the beneficent use he made of it. Such an individual is an ornament to his community, an acquisition to his country, an example to his fellowmen and indeed deserves to be called one of the noblest works of God.

It is a common practice with the general public, especially in India and more especially amongst the Parsees, to expect upon the death of an outstanding personality great things of his successor and if he fall, by even a small measure, below the level of his

illustrious predecessor he is marked out as a man of no consequence. The young hopeful has thus to enter into the arena of public life with this inevitable handicap.

With Hormusjee, the eldest son of Cowasjee, however, things were quite different. He proved himself to be, to use a hackneyed phrase, a chip of the old block, a revised edition of his father, an abridgment of all that was good and noble in him. All those qualities that go to the making of a Parsee Sethia, a class that has now died out, are inherent in him.

Here we might pause for a while and investigate as to what qualifications are necessary for the constitution of a Sethia. The answer probably is—ancestry, middle age, dress, manners, courteousness, communal service, philanthropy, piety, popularity and last but not least, an orthodox temperament. If you come across a venerable looking Parsee gentleman of good family in snow-white *dagli* with always a turban on his head, rather advanced in years, with whiskers or moustaches or both on, having the politeness of a nobleman, civil in manners, conservative in views, liberal with his moneys, and if that gentleman frequently attends religious places of worship on festive occasions, takes an active and keen interest in communal affairs, and has made himself universally respected by the masses and enjoys their confidence, that unique personality can with full justification come within the category

of a Sethia. Let local Diogeneses go about with their lanterns in their hands and they will discover only one individual to-day in possession of all these qualities and characteristics and that individual is without doubt the subject of this sketch, the last of the Parsee Sethias. As said above, the class has now vanished and as the surviving remnant of an interesting oligarchy, Sir Hormusjee's personality is made all the more notable and conspicuous and his biography absorbing and instructive.

Born in the year of the Indian Mutiny, young Hormusjee acquired the rudiments of the Gujarati language in a school in the Fort of Bombay. Thereafter he joined the Elphinstone and the Fort High Schools and passed his matriculation while yet in his teens. He was then sent to King's College, London, to give a finishing touch to his education, and that done, he acquired practical commercial knowledge in a firm in the English metropolis. His educational activities were then transferred from the banks of the Thames to those of the Seine and he entered as an apprentice in a firm in the capital of the French Empire. It was here that Hormusjee acquired knowledge of the French language which even to-day he speaks with comparative fluency.

In 1879 he returned to Aden after a couple of years' stay in Europe and joined his father's firm. He thus embarked in the voyage of life when he was only a score and two years of age and had resolved from the beginning of his career to ad-

vance more by the manipulations of the oar than by the motion of the wind. For a long period, year in and year out, he was chained down to his desk in his father's office and was instrumental in raising his firm to the high water-mark of mercantile enterprise. He was the pioneer in establishing a commercial link between Bombay and the African ports and was the first to introduce Indian merchandise in those distant regions. He is even to-day the senior partner of Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw & Bros., a firm well known as naval and mill agents and shipowners having their branches in almost all important towns of the world.

After the death of his father Cowasjee in 1900 fresh duties devolved upon Hormusjee as his eldest son and successor and which provided him with a wider field of useful activity. He is a typical product of the old school. From the very inception of his public career he extended his hand of succour to all around and made every man without distinction a denizen of his bosom. Never has he allowed his ears to be assailed with the lamentations of the suppliant without relieving them of their distress. Suffering humanity has ever melted his tender heart and it is always his aim to give the mendicant a human existence. His name is always in the forefront in all lists of public benefactions and it is gratifying to read that he has been spending about half a lac per year for the last several years for the alleviation of the sick and the indigent. As a friend of the masses his name will always be remembered

by the Aden and the Bombay public and will be transmitted to posterity as that of a philanthropic and *kind-hearted gentleman.*

Nature has engraved politeness and courtesy with so sharp a chisel in every lineament of Hormusjee's countenance that they mark him out as one of the most amiable gentlemen in the society in which he moves. He is a *persona grata* with the classes as well as with the masses. Men flushed with riches or those posted to high eminence will find their level under his roof with the meanest individuals his hospitality reaching them alike with the same warmth and fervour. Stranger and friend alike are welcomed there with affability and ease in the mild and gentle manners for which the owner of the mansion is so well distinguished. In his domestic circle the same virtues combine to exemplify in him the kind husband, loving father and a most affectionate grand-father.

We have mentioned above that one of the attributes distinguishing a Parsee Sethia is his stolid conservatism and we find that that characteristic has taken a strong hold of Sir Hormusjee who was very recently described as "a pillar of orthodoxy". To all intents and purposes he seems to worship it with idolatrous devotion. It might be mentioned here for the benefit of non-Parsee readers that the community has been divided to-day into two distinct schools, the reformers, who favour drastic changes both in religious and social customs pre-

vailing amongst them from times immemorial, and the anti-reformers or the orthodox who are wedded vehemently to the old order of things. The reformers' contention is as follows: "That we are an advancing community always in the vanguard of progress and that we should not grovel under the weight of antediluvian practices and usages borrowed perhaps centuries ago from the Hindus and now quite unsuited to modern ideas and requirements; that it would be a Herculean task to roll back the tide of liberalism and progress which has set in with such an irresistible rush in all parts of the world; that evolution is rampant everywhere, even the dry bones of hamlets and villages have been vivified and the whole world is astir with the pulsation of a new born instinct and that under the circumstances it is impossible at such a time to repress the impetuosity of an expanding world; that age is a stern monster whose mandates we all have to follow, otherwise we would be nowhere in the race of life and that that community which understands the irrepressible spirit of the age and adapts its institutions accordingly beats in the struggle its fellow community which cherishes with strange fatality stolid orthodoxy and rejects the suggestions of modern needs."

The anti-reformers, on the other hand, contend that any precipitate or inconsiderate action before the creation of a healthy opinion amongst the masses is more often than not apt to sow the seeds of dissension rather than accelerate progress; that in

their march towards the new order of things they might perhaps lose their individuality as members of the Parsee community whose very existence might be jeopardised; that the introduction of entirely new reforms without the old strength and backing, as advocated by the opposite side, will defeat their own end, endanger communal peace, concord and amity and divide the Parsees unnecessarily into factions and parties hardly conducive to its advancement and internal harmony.

Under these circumstances when partisan spirit runs so high, all eyes are turned towards the elders like Sir Hormusjee who command the respect and confidence of the people, and who could only explore the avenues of peace and unity banishing all factions and differences in the community, avoid a rupture and guide the combatants on to the paths of social and material welfare.

In all reforms and innovations, if at all introduced, one important factor to be remembered is that Parsee spirit should never be lost sight of but that it should be given modern expression acceptable to all shades of opinion. So long as the members of this microscopic community are true to themselves, true to their religious instincts and institutions, true to their ancient reputation and keep on marching abreast of the times, the forces of progress will set no limit to communal regeneration and the Parsees will continue to maintain their reputation as one of the most advanced communities of the East.

We have seen above that Sir Hormusjee is fond of living a simple life and belongs to that class who indulge in plain living and high thinking. He rises early and goes to bed before ten o'clock in the evening. He drinks moderately and was fond of physical exercises in his days he having been an athlete and a hill climber. He is punctual, methodical and avoids all excesses. He is a well-read man, has read Shakespeare, Scott, Victor Hugo, never reads "novels of horrors" and can talk tolerably well in French. He began to learn Persian when he had passed his three score years but could not master the language to his entire satisfaction. He has visited almost all parts of the world except Australia. He is a great admirer of British character and thinks "that an Englishman is all right so long as he is satisfied with what God meant him to be but gets into trouble when he tries to be something else." An Englishman, he says, is made for the times of crisis and emergency, serious in times of difficulty and in normal times free and easy. His admiration for Mahatma Gandhi is none the less praiseworthy and he hails him as the awakener of Indian nationhood, self-honour and self-respect.

Sir Hormusji once held and still holds many positions of responsibility at Aden and in Bombay and his character, private and moral, served to adorn the high offices he was called upon to fill. For all his multifarious services he was awarded more titles than one and was hailed as a Parsee "of spotless life and of great sincerity."

We have in this short Introduction tried to lay before the reader a bird's eye view of the careers of Cowasjee Dinshaw and his son Hormusjee the amplification of which will be found in this excellent volume, so beautifully printed and well got up and which should be read by every Parsee proud of his race and religion. The lives of both father and son are exemplary. While that of the former is a fine example of the triumph of mind over matter, the victory of industry and patience over the contending forces of poverty and pessimism, the latter's proves to the present generation that true regard for one's fellowmen, philanthropy, urbanity of manners and above all, virtue and piety, bring in their turn the love, respect and confidence of the people, which is the highest reward, the crowning glory for a man in the eventide of his life. Sir Hormusjee is a Parsee to the back-bone and as a true and faithful disciple of Zoroaster he has never faltered in his adherence to his noble religion which teaches him to lead a life of good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

J. R. B. JEEJEEBHOY

BOMBAY, 8*th June*, 1939.



Mr. Ambelal N. Joshi, Advocate,

the author of Sir Hormusjee's biography in Gujarati and English.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE Parsees of India have produced many illustrious personages of rare merits and outstanding abilities. These eminent men have by their golden deeds, humanitarian activities and cosmopolitan charities given additional lustre to the modern Parsees who are in duty bound to act upto the ancient ideals by holding fast to the glorious heritage of their far-famed ancestors. They have also played a very important part in India's all-comprehensive reconstruction and regeneration.

It is a rare quality among the Parsees to adjust and adapt themselves according to times and circumstances. They are noted for their adaptability, loyalty, devotion to duty and generosity. They are equally conspicuous for their religious tolerance and tender qualities of head and heart. Owing to these peculiar rare characteristics, they have become pioneers in many spheres having taken the initiative and lead in many an adventure among the teeming millions of India.

In this well-known, highly honoured and respected community with a benevolence of world-wide fame Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw has now become a household word. By his patriotism, national, religious and communal pride, philanthropy, steady and well-balanced views and also by his other

innumerable distinctive ameabilities: he has become the most esteemed *Akabar* of the Parsee Community. In fine, Sir Hormusjee is a class by himself, docile, cool, contented, sober, and lastly a patriarchal patrician with an individuality all his own.

Sir Hormusjee's optimism is almost contagious. All those individuals who have come in close touch with him have been impressed and inspired by his saintliness, simplicity, sincerity and versatility. Plain living and high thinking is his motto. He is good humoured, mild tempered, yet dignified and contented. He has the least ego or conceit in him and hence he seems to have not a single enemy in his life. His family always bows to his judgment, well knowing that he is ready. to grant any reasonable request. He is an omnivorous reader and possesses an excellent memory. A fascinating conversationalist and an admirer of English and French languages, Sir Hormusjee is a man of great achievement, far-seeing and circumspect. In short, he is at once a businessman, a patriot, a thinker, a philanthropist, and a leader of the Parsee community, whose service to India is as great as his love for her is profound.

Though Sir Hormusjee has been brought up under the combined influences of oriental and occidental cultures and civilisations, yet he has managed singularly to debar from his daily walks of life all those undesirable elements to be found in both of them and has adopted and assimilated only those

rare qualities and precious elements in them which have proved to be safely acceptable.

Even at present in his 83rd year, by his robust optimism, pleasing temperament, contentment and regular and orderly mode of living as well as by his passing a life of spotless morality, religious attachment and implicit faith in the Benign Creator, he is leading a healthy, vigorous and carefree life. In short, this Grand Old Man of the Parsee Community has the humanity of a humanitarian, gentlemanliness of a gentleman, saintliness of a saint, self-sacrificing philanthropy of an ideal Zoroastrian with compassion, piety, humility and respect ever seeking redemption and relief of suffering humanity.

Keeping this viewpoint before me I have attempted in the following pages a biographical sketch of Sir Hormusjee's life. Sir Hormusjee, the great patron of art and letters is not only my guide, philosopher and friend but has a personal and parental interest in my literary and legal activities. My admiration for him is not blind but his achievements demand that admiration and appreciation. I have the rare privilege of knowing Sir Hormusjee at close quarters during the last ten years and I can recall with pride some of the happiest and thrilling moments of my life. Sir Hormusjee is a man of very few words, he is unassuming, shy and reserved. Besides, he writes few letters and keeps no diary. He does not even remember accu-

rately the individuals, institutions or associations he has patronised with his purse during his life-time. He is now too old to be disturbed and has not the same enthusiasm, the same activity, and the same freshness which he had when I first met him. Sir Hormusjee now feels the pangs of old age in as much as he gets easily tired and requires complete mental and physical rest. Only those in his close confidence can thus throw a flood of light on his multifarious and multitudinous activities, his ideals and his views on the various burning problems of the day, and I can say with pride that it is my profound pleasure and proud privilege of being in Sir Hormusjee's close confidence and I have tried my best to interpret and appreciate him to the best of my abilities. I hope and trust, therefore, that this inspiring, instructive and illuminating biographical sketch of Sir Hormusjee will be a source of great inspiration to the rising generations of the Parsee Community.

Biographies of businessmen are few in number; for the life of a businessman, whose daily routine revolves between home and office, is a subject which rarely stimulates the pen and the general public has not so much interest in the life of a businessman as in that of a literateur, a man of action or a nation builder. Yet there may be consciously or unconsciously a latent message for others in the lives of businessmen and philanthropists like Sir Hormusjee, Lord Nuffield and Mr. Henry Ford in as much as that they not only know how to amass

wealth but equally know at the same time the utility of wealth and the manifold advantages accruing therefrom. By means of wealth they have succeeded in mitigating the misfortunes and calamities of suffering humanity, and have shown to the world the ideal of cosmopolitan charity, and the ideal of equitable distribution of riches. Sir Hormusjee is one who knows how to acquire wealth and how to dispose of a fortune. He has all the qualities which make a successful man of business and he can bring courage and imagination to bear upon all his undertakings. He is not in the least indifferent to money, nor to things which wealth can provide. Every commercial enterprise to which he sets his hand is meant to pay. But wealth, to Sir Hormusjee is never an end in itself, it is the means to an end—the greater prosperity of India and the amelioration of his co-religionists. He has a ready sympathy for honest politicians, ideal social reformers, selfless social workers, creative artists and humanitarians. Sir Hormusjee is a businessman no doubt but he is a business patriot in the full sense of the term.

Before I conclude, I must thank Dr. Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad, K.C.I.E., LL.D., the Liberal leader for kindly condescending to write an appreciative 'Foreword' and Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy, J.P. to write an illumined 'Introduction' to this biography. Last but not the least, I cannot forget Mr. Minocher R. Bhownagree, the intelligent, enthusiastic and obliging personal secretary of Sir Hormusjee,

whose spontaneous co-operation and assistance throughout the preparation of this biography have been simply praiseworthy and of inestimable value to me.

I am quite optimistic that the hero-worshipping community of the Parsees—who look upon Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw, Kt., as the Nestor and Tribune of the Parsee Community, the Hatem-e-Tai of Parsee charity, the Doyen of Parsee orthodoxy, the bulwark of Mazdaysni religion and rituals, the unflinching opponent of pernicious religious and social reforms, the philanthropist without a peer and the glory and pride of the Parsee Community —might do full justice to immortalise his name even during his life-time and might imbibe the various sovereign virtues and sterling qualities which are deeply impregnated in his heart.

High Court, Bombay,
Monday, 10th July, 1939

AMBELAL N. JOSHI

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Life and Times of

Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw, Kt.

CHAPTER I

India in The Mid-Victorian Age

THE year 1857 is one of the most important in the history of India. This year witnessed a revolution of such magnitude that it evoked surprise everywhere and as a result of this, political changes which had far-reaching effects on the history of the country occurred everywhere. The various peoples inhabiting this vast sub-Continent achieved a national consciousness. They began to realise their position and with one accord strove to liberate themselves from a foreign yoke and as a result of their untiring efforts attained the power needed for this. This revolution resulted in a far greater loss of life than the French or Russian revolutions undertaken for the liberation of their respective countries by these two Great nations of Europe. The spirit of rebellion was fostered by the autocratic and dictatorial methods of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General who believed like the heads of two totalitarian states in Europe at the present time in *force*. His aim was to control the entire population of India as completely as lay in his power and to subjugate the proud rulers of independent states with a view to increasing the prestige of England in this country. He further desired to increase trading facilities for Britishers, to start railways, post and telegraph offices, to build canals and roads, and to send emissaries in fact to infuse Western ideals

and Western culture in the Indian people. Strange as it may seem this scheme was rejected by the British Cabinet even though Lord Dalhousie was mainly instrumental in achieving for the East India Company a far larger share of political influence than it had ever enjoyed. Lord Dalhousie's policy was not calculated to placate the Indian people. Instead, it aroused a fierce and very general sense of resentment against the British on every hand. The spirit of dissatisfaction which had been seething in every department of life like a hidden volcano suddenly burst into flame and spread like wildfire over the length and breadth of the country. With the possible exception of Gujarat which remained totally unaffected both the rulers and the ruled forgot the principles of humanity and became cruel and vicious. But in the effort to attain freedom the nation achieved a solidarity it had never known before, inflamed as were the separate units by a singleness of purpose and the concerted effort of working for a common end.

A remarkable spirit of patriotism was abroad. It testified to the love of one's country and displayed a pride and exultation in liberating it from a foreign yoke. Unfortunately the men who made these efforts were unable to succeed in securing what they wanted. The results were in fact absolutely to the contrary because they lost the little they had and brought on themselves retaliatory measures which the British Cabinet promulgated as a safeguard against the repetition of a similar rebellion. Actually

the rebels frustrated their own purpose and proved that they lacked prudence, foresight and wisdom in the right direction. As a further result of the Mutiny the British Government (laying all the blame for this on the East India Company) itself took over the task of governing India and the Country was placed directly under the British Crown. Consequently it was better governed, with that attention to justice and efficiency of detail which marks British administration. All over the world for a long period in the history of India the sense of security which the British Government inspired had not been experienced. Men realised that for the future, their lives, their property, their worldly possessions were safe, and they regarded the advent of the British in India with tolerance and satisfaction. A new era started in the history of the nation. New laws were introduced, new ideas came into being. Western ideals of culture and ways of living entered our lives. Our minds were swayed by a civilisation with a content entirely different to our own. There was about that primary impact with European civilisation none of the degrading denationalisation one witnesses today. To minds wholesome and entirely uncorrupted by the accumulated hybridism of our times the fusion of East and West brought a happy and beneficial expansion. Macaulay's famous prophecy concerning Indians educated in European ideals, thought and tradition demanding for themselves "that liberty which is the birth-right of every nation" came true. That day, Macaulay had said "would

be a great day in the history of the British nation", and that prophecy was borne out. And just as in other countries people are revolutionised by new movements in thought so the advent of the English entirely changed our outlook on life. With the establishment of further contacts between England and India, the spread of English education and Western ideals India turned over a fresh leaf in her history. This was a totally new phase and in 1858 when Queen Victoria issued her famous Proclamation holding out hopes and promises of self-Government to the people of this country, India achieved a stability and peace she had not very often enjoyed before.

Her history before that year had been marked by internicine warfare and invasion by foreign powers who desired to gain an ascendancy over her territories. After 1857 British policy in India was the cause of much dissatisfaction among the Indian people. Dictated by avarice the English captured by foul means or fair any province they could lay their hands on, annexed every State which had the misfortune to be ruled by a weak *Maharaja, Sultan* or *Nawab,* and in short displayed that brigandage on a huge scale which is usually glorified by the name of Conquest. Allied to this was the contempt with which they treated our people, an attitude which (as pointed out by some Anglo-Indians at the time) was mainly responsible for the feeling of hatred and distrust which was now beginning to be felt in India.

British rule in the East commenced in the year 1757 when the famous Battle of Plassey was fought. From that day plans were made to establish it on a permanent basis in India. For a period of hundred years i.e. 1757 to 1857 the history of India reflected great and continuous changes. During these years the British Government dedicated itself to the expansion of its political power and prestige. The Governor-Generals gave all their attention to stabilising their power and building a firm foundation for British rule in India to the entire neglect of other questions.

The Calcutta *Madressa* and the Asiatic Society founded by Warren Hastings were making attempts to understand the point of view of the Indian people. Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore also endeavoured to understand their problems but up to the viceroyalty of Lord Dalhousie the chief interest of these representatives of the British throne was to secure an abiding foundation for their rule in the East.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century however, that fruitful period in the history of England, there dawned on British statesmen a sense of what they owed to the Indian people. A feeling of responsibility was awakened, in consequence of which a Bill found its way into Parliament sanctioning a lakh of rupees for education in Bengal. In 1817 under British direction a school for Hindu boys was founded in Calcutta where English was taught. And later the same year saw the founding

of a college for Hindu boys of good families where they had the opportunity of imbibing all that was best in Western culture. In 1835 a medical college was started and other improvements were made in educational sphere which brought about a series of corresponding improvements in ways of living. In India, social conditions and accepted beliefs began to change. Even the masses had begun to consider social and moral questions and approached these with common sense. British officials who up to this time had paid little heed to the social aspect of Indian life set themselves resolutely to the solution of these problems and gave them detailed and careful attention.

Lord William Bentinck's viceroyalty especially was marked by peaceful social progress and the evolution of the people in various directions. With the co-operation of Raja Ram Mohan Roy known as the Martin Luther of India he abolished the reprehensible custom of *Suttee* and child-burning. Highway robbers who constituted a menace to innocent pedestrians who were often done to death by them were severely dealt with. Another measure which had very far-reaching effects on education was also passed during Lord Bentinck's viceroylty. By this it was resolved that all higher studies in Indian schools and colleges should be carried out through the medium of English. Consequently a greater impetus was given to English literature, history and science. It also paved the way for people who had a genuine love for knowledge and

desired to acquire all that Western education would provide to achieve their end. Yet another item of Lord Bentinck's administration provided that official posts in the East India Company should be given to deserving persons irrespective of caste or creed. It was the great Lord Bentinck's earnest desire to raise the moral and cultural standard of the Indian people and with that object in view he legislated wisely for reforms. It was only natural that under these circumstances India's illiterate masses should come to believe that British *raj* in India had a divine significance.

The social condition of India just before the nineteenth century had dawned was really pitiful. Child marriage, child sacrifice, polygamy, legislation against the remarriage of widows, superstitious beliefs masquerading as religion and a slavish mentality which flattened unashamedly to gain its end were rampant. Hindu society was said to be in the last stage of decay. Moral and physical courage and the spirit of adventure were sadly lacking in the people of India. Even their conceptions of charity and generosity was perverted. Many of them had great wealth but had not learnt how to live. Hindu *rajahs* were distinctly autocratic in their outlook. The condition of the Muslims was even more pitiable than that of the Hindus; but the *Parsees* at that time in the history of India came to the forefront on account of their courage, their energy and that rare kindliness of heart which still distinguishes the community and which led a well-known Eng-

lish traveller and writer to describe them as "the loving people of God". Side by side with the English they took an active part in the political and commercial life of the country. They travelled far and wide and impressed all as a peace-loving, generous, selfless, large-hearted and idealistic people who were destined to play a very important part in the advancement of their adopted country. They were on good terms with both Hindus and Mahommedans and were respected by both for their good qualities.

The purdah system was then at its height; this system which makes a woman's life unbearable in the extreme was especially prevalent in Bengal and the whole of Northern India. It was a direct result of Mahommedan rule and, as it were, a legacy of their Empire. Founded originally as a kind of protective measure against the invading hordes of the North it degenerated into a convention by means of which no respectable woman of gentle birth could or would leave her house uncovered or show herself in public. Indian Christian women and those belonging to the lower strata of society were exempted as were the wives and daughters of that reformist section of Hindu society known as the *Brahmo Samajists.* A woman's life was indeed more pitiful than a prisoner's. The social conditions of her time made her a slave. Having been brought up in ignorance and smothered with superstition the flower of Indian womanhood wilted away without encountering the bloom of life or

being blown on by the winds of ennobling and elevating experiences. She did not have the courage to revolt against those religious and moral principles which were then current. She dreaded social ostracisation above everything else. The rigidities of an inflexible caste system and the dictates of a social code marked by a singular lack of elasticity were responsible for making Hindu society what it was in those days. Thousands of human beings lived like animals. Existence for them was a sort of death in life to be got through anywhere, anyhow and with a minimum of effort. The social fabric had entirely collapsed and nowhere on the horizon could one see even a distant dawn of the reformation. All those factors which might have contributed to the uplift of Hindu society were by its very nature destroyed, because it contained within its own constitution the germs of decay.

Travel either by land or sea was considered by Hindus of that period as something sacriligeous and sinful. Severe punishment was meted out to the few adventurous ones who crossed the seas in those days. Ex-communication was the usual penalty for this and it was withdrawn for a consideration not unconnected with the goods of this world and if the sinner repented in public and asked for forgiveness. But the *Parsees* of those days having been in contact with Western thought and ideals came to believe otherwise. Having been for a long time subjected to Hindu influences they had absorbed Hindu ideals of life and conduct but the

impact of Western civilisation effected a magical transformation. They began to believe in that broadening of the intellectual faculty and the extension of experience which travel alone can give, and set out to distant countries as far apart as China, Japan, Africa and Europe. They traded with all these countries and made a name for themselves as the pioneers of many a commercial enterprise in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the field of religion several ignorant and superstitious practices were rampant and were being followed regardless of their suitability or otherwise to the spirit of the times. These practices consisted of visits to temples, shrines, mere ritual and feasting among one's own caste. The spirit of religion was entirely absent. Those great men who were to discover inspiration for the Soul in religion were still to be born. The teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati or the great spiritual message of Vivekananda had not yet reached his countrymen. Karsandas who was destined to strike at the root of all the corruption raging among the religious teachers of the Vallabhacharya clique was still in his cradle. Idolatry was rampant all over the country. Hinduism since the Middle ages had degenerated into the worst form of idolatry and into meaningless mummeries and dogmas. Some of the inhabitants of this vast continent had already started making tremendous efforts to rid themselves of the ignorance and tyranny with which religion at that time was invested.

The man who first lit the torch of *Ahimsa*, who taught the Indian nation the significance of independence, gave them ideas about equality and the brotherhood of man, who abolished all those religious customs which were harmful to India: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was yet to be born. On all hands there was ignorance and the darkness of superstition.

In those days the joint family system was in full force which guaranteed in a measure the safety of the individual and acted as a sort of national insurance against want. But contact with the British affected tremendous changes. Hindus began to regard the joint family system with disfavour, a system which had the sanction of a tradition rooted in antiquity and discarded it with the enthusiasm born of fresh and unexplored ideals. Society began to take on a new form and the process of Westernization commenced bringing with it certain inevitable reactions which resulted in evil. It cannot be denied that through Western education India became conscious of the world as a whole of its social conditions and history. Her consciousness was awakened, her thirst for knowledge increased but it had a distinctly deleterious effect on Indian life and ways of thought and living.

All that period the industrial and economic condition of India too, was far from satisfactory. Britain was mainly responsible for her destruction in the economic field. Britishers who had come out

to trade with India made every effort to destroy completely her cloth industry. They used the same nefarious tactics successfully in connection with the shipping trade. They laid a huge embargo on shipping. Money was not scarce among the people but it could not be used (owing to the lust for hoarding precious metals) for economic expansion or the development of industries. The insecurity with which the country had been afflicted owing to unsettled political conditions had bred in the people a habit of burying their treasures underground. Besides, the autocratic economic policy of the British Cabinet was responsible for the very great increase in the National Debt of India. The existence, the increase and the history of the national debt in India is an abiding stain on British prestige, British justice and British modes of Government in India.

It must be remembered that the Indian mill industry had not at that time come into existence except for a small cotton mill in Bombay which had been started in 1856 and a jute mill which had been established in Calcutta the previous year. India's foreign trade, too was still in its infancy. The great Jamshetji Tata who achieved such glory and Premchand Roychand who displayed so much acumen in the commercial and economic world had not yet risen to the heights of the fame they were later on to achieve. However in the near future certain phases were noticeable in the economic progress of the country which were very hopeful. She was at that period in industrial, com-

mercial and mechanical equipment a century behind the other nations of the West with whom she had to compete.

Methods of communication and transport were equally out of date and useless. The British Government however set itself to tackle this problem and during Lord Bentinck's regime steamers began to ply between England and India. The first railway line made its appearance during Lord Dalhousie's viceroyalty and gradually spread through the length and breadth of the country. The improved means of communication naturally brought many benefits in their train: trade increased and several industries were set afoot. In times of famine especially railway transport enabled food to be rushed to the afflicted areas so that the toll of death grew lesser. Grain became cheaper and with increased travelling facilities the taste for travel increased with its attendant widening of social and intellectual frontiers. Provincialism disappeared and a national consciousness began to evolve, rooted in the idea that from the Himalayas to Ceylon was one country, one land common to the race.

Postal and telegraph communications which came into existence at the same time further increased the facilities for foreign and internal trade. India was being developed rapidly on Western lines and was beginning to take her place among the foremost countries of the world.

Public life such as we know it today was un-

known at that period in India, but this began to develop by slow degrees. Some rights had been granted to our people but were insufficient to rouse their political consciousness. But the blessing of higher education and the founding of the three famous universities at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras produced a crop of young men who might be said to be the pioneers of public life in India. In 1885 the first meeting of the *Hindi Rashtriya Mahasabha* took place, an event which may be traced to the efforts of those Great Indian leaders, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. Naoroji Fardunji who started political work in Bombay and Gazula Lakshmi Narasimhulu Chetty who did the same in Madras. "The public life of India has been adorned by a galaxy of brilliant intellects and selfless patriots" says Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, "but there has been none in our time comparable with Dadabhai Naoroji."

In order to ensure the safety and spread the ideal of political and public service several institutions were started. Among these figures the British India Association, the founders of which were famous men like Harish Chandra Mukerjee, Kristo Das Pal and Ram Gopal Ghosh. In Bombay Dadabhai Naoroji took a very prominent part in establishing the Bombay Presidency Association. Poona had its Sarvajanik Sabha and Madras, the Madras Native Association. Rules and Regulations for Council entry were being drawn up as early as 1861 but they were such that the real representatives of

the people were not able to get in and to ensure this several efforts were made, public meetings held and propaganda carried on in the press.

From 1835 when Sir Charles Metcalfe gave the vernacular press full liberty of expression to the time of Lord Lytton who in 1878 brought the vernacular press and the journals under control several English monthlies and dailies of a very high order were started under Indian editorships and Indian control and these helped very much in educating public opinion. Chief among these were the "*Hindoo Patriot*" under Harish Chandra Mukerji and Kristo Das Pal; the "*Indian Mirror*" of Keshub Chunder Sen, "*The Bengalee*" of Girish Chunder Ghosh and the "*Amrita Bazar Patrika*" of the two famous namesakes Babu Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Babu Motilal Ghosh. This paper did a great deal to rouse public opinion in Bengal. In Bombay Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji's journal "*The Voice of India*", "*Native Opinion*" run by Mr. Mandlik and Mr. Telang's "*Indu Prakash*" worked hard in the same direction for a similar objective, as did the "*Tribune*" in the Punjab under the able guidance of Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia. Although the press had all these great ventures to its credit and was mainly instrumental in awakening the public consciousness still we were at this period in our history sadly lacking in orators. Sir Surendranath Banerjee, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lord Sinha, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, Mr. C. R. Das, Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad and Pandit Motilal Nehru were still to come.

With the introduction of the English language and the study of English history new ideals set in. The cruel customs and practices of old had begun to disappear and there was vigour and freshness in the public life of India. The country was now united as it had never been before. Under one power peace and security were obtained; and under the able guidance of the British Government all the various provinces had as it were become united in one compact whole. Contacts were established between the different provinces which brought an exchange of culture, ideals and intellectual assimilation of what was good in each. The press was harnessed to support the cause and the combined strength of all these forces produced a great upheaval in the national life. What had been considered unacceptable through the ages in the sphere of social custom intellectual thought or religious creeds now began to be popular, principally because of the inefficiency of these tenets. All matters were judged from the stand point of practicality. Utilitarianism proved the final test. The history of India which had been so far a history of several religious customs and ideals entirely changed its various aspects.

Literature in its different branches of prose, poetry, drama, biography, history, moral and religious philosophy also underwent tremendous changes. India which upto now had revelled in *Sanskrit* and *Persian*, now took up side by side English, *Bengalee, Hindi, Gujarati, Kanarese, Ma-*



Sir Hormusiee Cowasji Dinshaw,
Kt., O.B.E. ,M.V.O.

rathi and displayed keen interest in the literature of all these tongues. Gradually, great writers who had a sense of beauty, imaginative power and understood their responsibility towards the public appeared on the horizon. The Indian people left behind all that was harmful to them, their old superstitions and harmful religious practices and incorporated in their lives new ideals and elements which made for progress and happiness.

Such was the state of the country in the middle of the nineteenth century. The effects of the Mutiny were still clearly visible. British authority seemed unendurable. The people did not still have enough faith in British policy, British promises, the Britishers themselves and their political attitude to India. They were regarded with fear, dislike and intense distrust. Dissatisfaction, lack of faith, and hatred were to be seen on all sides. The political atmosphere was surcharged with rebellion and tense with excitement. Distant rumblings of the storm which was about to break with so much fury could already be heard. Everything worked steadily to a tragic climax till in 1857 the Indian Mutiny broke out. In the same historic year, on the 4th of April was born in Bombay Hormusjee, the son of Seth Cowasji Dinshaw, who was destined to be a credit to his family, his community and to the country which had been adopted as their own by his ancestors.

CHAPTER II

The Immigration of the Parsees into India and their Growing Share in the Country's Public Life and Modern Growth

THE Parsee Community is famous all over the world, and like the Hindu inhabitants of India are proud to style themselves Aryans. Both these Great Communities not only come from the same stock but there is a great deal of similarity between their social and religious ideas and customs and their general outlook on life. The Hindu Vedas and the Iranian Zend Avesta also show a remarkable similarity.

The Parsees originally came from a province called Pers or Fars from which they derive their name. In those days Persia had a mighty empire, an empire which has been justly famous all over the world. Some of its leaders have been men who could well be proud of their attainments. Their greatest dynasty was known as the Sassanian and their greatest Emperor was the famous Yezdegard-i-Sheriar whose nobility and greatness have formed the subject of many an Iranian book.

The ancient Persians according to a well-known Greek historian were taught three things: to ride a horse, to draw the bow and to tell the truth, and the glory of their great Empire was not merely

secular but spiritual. Though the world has had many emperors who have been labelled "the Great" it is Persia alone which can boast of a Noshirwan, *the Just.* The Parsees still retain that regard for Truth and the phrase "Aren't you ashamed, being a Parsee, not to tell the truth" has often confronted delinquents who have deviated from this path.

Between the Hindus and Persians of those times not only was there a great deal of connection but it is said that the great Persian Emperor Darius invaded India in the year 510 B.C., and Behramgor another of the famous Iranian kings also came to India in the year 432 A.D. In the seventh century a number of Iranians settled on the west coast of India and it is believed and proved by Wildford that one of them became the kings of Udaipur.

The ancient history of these glorious Iranians is famous for what it can teach. It is an edifying, instructive and glorious panorama of the achievements of a great race and a great people. Great historians, poets and *savants* from the East and West have testified to the beauty and greatness of their ancient culture and we have as a result a complete and continuous record of their actions. Compared to their numerical strength the achievements of the Parsees have been far in excess of their numbers. This cannot be explained except by the fact that it is the greatness of their racial heritage which still persists amongst its members and bears fruit in a variety of ways.

The Sassanian Empire was one of the greatest and largest that the world had ever known. It had shaken the foundations of the Great Roman Empire itself but like all earthly things was eclipsed and fell to the ground. During the reign of the great Yezdegard-i-Sheriar who had been crowned king in 631 A.D. preparations for war were afoot in all the four corners of the Khalifa and when Khalif Omar (634-644) had been elected and installed he gathered a large army and invaded Sassanian territory. In the year 635 A.D. in the Battle of Kadisiyah the Iranians were completely defeated. They were again routed later in 641 and this brought about the end of the Zoroastrian Empire of Persia, and all the power passed into the hands of the Persian Khalifs. Yazdegard himself was compelled to flee and came to mountainous Khorassan on the east coast of Persia where after wandering for ten years he was eventually murdered in 651 A.D.

The year 641 A.D. is considered very important in the history of the Parsees because in that year on account of the downfall of their Empire the destinies of the community were vitally affected. The effects were disquietening at the start but events must be judged by their results and in the gradual unfolding of later events we have seen that these reversals worked out to the ultimate triumph of the community. Although Persia fell into the hands of Muslims the Parsees brought up in the traditions of Jamshed and Noshirwan remained loyal to their great Mazdayasnan religion and bravely faced all

sorts of hardships and troubles fearlessly to attain their object.

In the desperate and protracted conflict of *Kadisiyah*, which lasted for four days, the Iranians were victorious for the first three days. The tide of the battle was turned by the sandstorm, and not for lack of generalship or heroism. In a critical period of Iran's history we find the elements conspiring to help her overthrow. If Iran was destined to fall she fell covered with glory. Natural calamities like the terrible plague during the reign of King Sheroy or Kobad II played havoc. Nearly half the population of Iran was destroyed thereby. Not less significant was the vile and treacherous part played by the intriguing, faithless *Mazdakites* in bringing the country's downfall.

After the battle of *Nihavind* in 641 A.D. the Arab invaders turned Iran's people into a conquered enslaved, ruthlessly oppressed and ill-treated population. It was but natural that the religion of the vanquished should be the first object of persecution at the hands of victors whose wars and conquests were all prompted by religious fanaticism and bigotry. The Persian clergy were persecuted and slain, their sacred fire temples desecrated and destroyed and their sacred books burnt. The faithful followers of the ancient national creed were subjected to so many indignities and extortions as to make life *not only burdensome, but well-nigh impossible.* Their property, their lives, their honour were completely at the mercy of the foreign rulers. But even

at the time of the conversion of the country to Islam, which was an accomplished fact in less than two hundred years after the conquest great numbers preferred every hardship to apostacy. Iran ceased to exist as a state, and she lost her national religion which under the assaults of continued and energetic proselytism disappeared almost entirely.

With the aid of the sword, the faith of the prophet of Mecca and Medina was carried to the worshippers of Zoroastrian religion. When the Arab hordes overran and pillaged Iran, they took the ladies of the Royal House of Sassan into captivity, and brought and sold them as slaves in the market place of Medina. A hundred thousand persons were compelled to abjure daily the faith of their forefathers, at the point of the sword. But even conversion brought no true equality. The contemptuous treatment of the Persians was persisted in for many generations.

It is common knowledge, even at present, in Iran that Khalif Omar, who invaded and conquered Iran, caused the Zoroastrian sacred scriptures and other books to be destroyed. He feared that if Iran remained strong, Islam would never spread and flourish. He therefore wanted to crush Zoroastrianism. This was quite contrary to the injunctions of the Prophet, and equally contrary to the spirit of the *Koran* and the *Shariat*. The very fact that, though thousands of Iranians were converted by force to Islam, the chieftains of Omar, not content with that, sought the Khalif's permission to convert the entire Zoroastrian population shows clearly, if

proof were at all needed, how fanatically the conquerors persecuted the conquered. When a faithful companion and disciple of the Prophet, like Omar broke his master's pledged word not to molest Iranians or Zoroastrianism, it is not to be wondered at if the Arab soldiers frenzied with war fever, and ignorant of the *Shariat* violated the Prophet's injunctions. The Khalif realised his grave blunder, only too late. Enough destruction had already been done.

In spite of terrible persecution of the Iranians, the Arabs never succeeded in subduing the Iranian spirit of bravery independence and religious devotion. The inhabitants of Seistan, Tabaristan and Khorassan, in particular, carried on for a long time the struggle for independence against the Arab invaders. The Zoroastrian clergy maintained and developed Iranian tradition, orally as well as in a written form; though the *Pahlavi* script was proscribed, and if any Iranian, converted or otherwise, tried to write in the national tongue, he was put to death.

In course of time the persecution of the Iranians became so unbearable, that the faithful followers of Zoroaster were compelled to flee to the mountainous region of Kohistan, where they lived for a hundred years. From here they migrated to island of Hormaz. Ultimately the sons of the soil had to leave their beloved native land for the sake of their religion, dearer to them than their lives. History of the human race affords us no such instance as the

noble, warlike, pious, and faithful remnants of a once most renowned race, sacrificing their all, to preserve their religion and their sacred fire, and migrating to a foreign land. After staying for a few years at Diu, the immigrants finally came to Sanjan and settled there.

Sanjan at the period marked by the advent of the Parsees was ruled by a Hindu king called Jadhav Rana; as soon as they landed at Sanjan (according to popular belief) they sent their Head Priest, Neriyo Sang Dhaval to the ruling prince with a batch of seven of his associates. The Dastur Sahib blessed the Rana who seeing the brave, armed, warlike and noble Persians was amazed, but being a great warrior himself and an admirer of all that was loyal and brave welcomed them and inquired into their past history and ancient traditions. Neriyo Sang described the persecutions they had undergone because of their religion and begged permission of the ruling Chief to let his people remain in Sanjan. Jadhav Rana granted the request with great pleasure and at the same time asked the learned Dastur to throw light on the customs, the political and religious conceptions of his followers which were described at great length with great attention to detail and with such enthusiasm and feeling that the noble Rana struck by the similarity between the two ancient religions and touched by the sad plight of this little batch of noble Zoroastrians immediately gave them the permission to settle in Sanjan provided they accepted certain conditions. These included the explanation of their religious doctrines,

the surrendering of their mother-tongue in favour of an Indian language, the compulsory adoption of the Hindu dress by their women, of Hindu marriage customs (especially the one relating to the performance of that ceremony at night) and the giving up of their arms and weapons of war. Placed as they were the Parsees were compelled to accept these conditions. Their main object was to be allowed the freedom to pursue their beloved faith and this they had achieved. So long as religious tolerance was forthcoming they were prepared to put up with everything else. Dastur Neryo Sang on this occasion gave vent to assertions which have since become historic. He said, "O Rana of Sanjan, we shall remain faithful to you in word and deed; we shall help you in your hour of distress, aid you in achieving for your country prosperity and wealth and always remain loyal to this ancient land". To this Jadhav Rana replied, "O Parsees, so brave, so chivalrous, so fortunate, so successful come to our country and make our Motherland prosperous."

After their immediate difficulties had been solved by them in this manner the Parsees settled in India. After the fall of the Persian Empire these Zoroastrians who had been faithful to their religion displayed an uncommon love and faith in its tenets. Their devotion to it was boundless, and although they could not resuscitate their lost empire they consciously devoted all their energy in preserving their ancient religion, as a first step towards this they determined to preserve the sacred fire. They

considered no self-sacrifice too great which helped along this end. After the death of Yezdegard-i-Sheriar the sacred fire took his place in the hearts of all true Zoroastrians. They named it *Iran Shah* and even today every true devotee of that ancient faith renders unto the sacred fire the homage, loyalty and devotion they rendered to their empire.

After the coming of the Parsees to Sanjan they built a huge fire-temple with the co-operation of the Hindus and installed the sacred fire in it with great pomp and ceremonial. From now on they developed a love for the people of India and lived with them on the best of terms. The Iranians loved their land and its people because they knew that both the great nations came from the same stock. Due to their great qualities the Parsees became very popular with the local inhabitants but although they mixed freely they managed to preserve the individuality of their race and did not merge into the others. These qualities have won them the high position they now occupy in India and if the present is any indication to the future there is no doubt but that they will retain their distinctive characteristics in the years to come.

For three hundred years dating from the year 936 A.D. when they landed at Sanjan the Parsees occupied themselves with farming and agriculture and lived in great contentment and happiness. At this period the country as such was full of ignorance and superstition from the effects of which the new settlers undoubtedly suffered. But later on members of this great community with their enterprise,

courage, initiative, their willingness to sacrifice everything for their religion and their undoubted pluck shook off all the elements which hampered their progress and adopted an outlook diametrically opposed to that in which they had been placed. Due to the advent of the British they acquired the back-ground necessary to bring out their qualities which received an impetus with this connection. Their numbers increased and gradually they moved to other parts of Gujarat and settled there. Bansda, Navsari, Broach, Ankleshwar, Cambay, Variav, Wankaner and the southern portion of Thana were among the places selected and wherever they went they were accompanied by the symbols of their religion.

In the 13th century the dasturs or priests decided that the Parsee inhabitants of Gujarat were to be divided into five different units. At the head of each section there was to be a *panthaki* or head priest who would be responsible for the religious services in his province. These five *panthakis* were to be nominated by the whole Assembly and they were taken from certain families. This right was hereditary and had to be handed down from father to son. Thus the Sanjan priests acquired the charge of the biggest Parsee fire-temple in India known as *Iran Shah* which housed the sacred fire which had been brought out from Iran.

However, all was not smooth sailing for the Parsees. Sultan Mahomed Begda, the ruler of Gujarat had a favourite who was known as Sardar

Alaf Khan; this Sardar invaded Sanjan and for the safety of *Iran Shah* and their Hindu rulers these valiant descendants of a valiant race fought hard and long. Sardar Ardeshir their leader defeated Alaf Khan but in the next battle he lost himself in the desert and the Hindu rajah had to surrender to the enemy. The Parsees endured great hardships but remained loyal to their ruler and to their promises.

With the fall of Sanjan, however, they were again compelled to move on. They carried the fire to the mountainous caves of Baharote and in this dread pilgrimage a great many of their numbers perished. The few that remained lived in the caves and after an interlude at Bansda they carried the sacred fire to Navsari where they found the climate pleasant and suitable. For 225 years this symbol of their religion was housed in the city until the Mahratta attack again compelled them to move farther South to Surat where it remained till peace was established three years later when Navsari was again resorted to for headquarters. Meanwhile a quarrel had arisen between the priests of Sanjan and Navsari. An attempt to get this settled was undertaken by Damaji Gaekwad but proved abortive and the Sanjan priests left Navsari bearing the holy fire. They stopped at Bulsar for a year and at last on the 28th of October 1742 A.D. came to Udwada and installed the symbol of their glorious religion in that place.

This sacred fire is still burning to this day at Udwada. Hundreds of religious Parsees visit the

place and in the fulness of their hearts offer their devotion to this ancient symbol of their religion for which their forefathers had laid down their lives, had left their native land and had become exiles on foreign soil. This flame guides them, acts as a living force in their lives indicating the path of righteousness and divinity.

After the installation at Udwada the Parsees settled in Gujarat, earned their living tilling the fertile soil and flourishing lands of that province. With their essential truthfulness, commercial integrity, generosity, purity of life, common sense and sense of humour they lived in friendly communion with the other communities of Gujarat. They succeeded at the same time in retaining their own customs, their traditions and their religious ceremonies.

Gradually, the Parsees spread over other provinces of Hindustan, engaged in commerce, enjoyed positions of responsibility under Hindu and Muslim rulers and through frequent changes in the government of the country retained their individuality and their culture.

They left their mark on Indian public life in the reign of Emperor Akbar who invited their high priest Dastur Meherji Rana to his court to expound the doctrines of their religion. The Emperor was so impressed by this discourse that he was not only ready to adopt many of the dictates of Zoroastrianism but expressed great admiration for their past

history, race, religion and courage. Later, when the British came to India their inherent genius for commercial enterprise came to the fore and they succeeded in establishing vast trade concerns all over. The Portuguese, Dutch and English gave them a great deal of encouragement. Their fidelity and other virtues were appreciated by the Europeans who made them their agents and brokers. From being agriculturists, weavers, carpenters, shipbuilders they embarked on commerce and opened new markets in the Far East. Members of the two Communities came closer together. The Parsees inspired confidence and good feelings prevailed between the two till the end of the nineteenth century. Today this camaraderie has languished, and feelings of reserve and aloofness have crept into the relationship though with the progress of time it is to be hoped that the old relationship will revive.

The commercial and public life of the Parsees began with the advent of the British but it was not until they left Surat and came to Bombay that they reached the height of their prosperity. Before this as a community they had lived insignificant lives. They were known to be simple, God-fearing, industrious and energetic people. Their long break from Iran and years of servitude had temporarily subdued their martial qualities and their adventurous spirit, so that the other communities in India had never had a chance to realise their latent capacity in different spheres of life and work. It was not until they left for the city of Bombay that their humble destinies changed. This event marked

as important a step in their lives as their departure from Iran. The greatness of Bombay, is entirely due to the gallant efforts of these descendants of the ancient Iranians. The public life of the city, its position as *urbs prima* in India, its importance as the commercial metropolis of the country and as the main centre of political life can be traced to the leaders of this small and independent community. They have been the builders of the city, its trade and industry and pioneers of every movement which has contributed to its greatness. Its educational and religious institutions, art colleges, hospitals, palatial hotels, architectural beauties are due to their generosity and enterprise. Its prosperity and grandeur, its pleasures and amenities even today revolve round the Parsees. It is a well-known fact that no charity, no enterprise, no venture of any kind can (unless it is patronised by them) flourish to any extent.

Side by side with their activities in India the Parsees had been trading with China and the Far East. In 1750, Lowji Wadia built a dockyard and laid the foundation of foreign trade. In 1756 Hirji Readymoney was the first Indian to go to China and open communications between that Country and the West. In the 18th and 19th centuries the Parsees unhindered by superstition and not prevented by the dictates of their religion from crossing the sea ventured abroad and were successful overseas. Their supremacy is being challenged now-a-days owing to the entry of other Indians into the field, people who are now shedding these ancient

beliefs in the wake of other enlightened races. No one can deny, however, that their contribution in the building-up of this country has in certain spheres been greater and more *disinterested*, than that of Indians themselves. In industry and commercial enterprise and in activities which have brought the blessings of civilisation to this ancient land they have stood supreme. They have always been and still are public-spirited and have shown this enviable trait in service to their country, their community, their religion and their king. Their achievements are almost epic in character, in their quiet heroisms their unostentatious gallantry, and their indomitable courage. The history of these Iranian fire-worshippers has not been marked by spectacular accomplishment.

It has rather displayed the far more difficult chivalry of the every day, of actions quietly and heroically performed without any of the corresponding reward which accompany showy and glamourous sheds. They have always been lovers of truth, (a quality which was considered in ancient Persia as the most essential and noble of all) their generosity is a byword, and their sympathies are quiet and ready to hand at the first call of distress. They have encouraged the arts, poetry, drama and literature. They have been quiet and alive to their opportunities and whatever field of activity they have engaged in have triumphed in that sphere.

India offered them in the peculiar political situation in which she was placed round about the

eighteenth century splendid opportunities for amassing wealth; but they have shown how money can be used to benefit others and are singularly free from that avaricious and hoarding spirit which marks those possessed of wealth among other races. The average Parsee does not only "live and let live" but he has a peculiarly happy knack of helping others to do so. His "goodwill" is surprising and as evident as his love of good living, of enjoyment, of getting the last possible bit out of life, of having a good time and sharing his blessings with the world. Their women have evolved that undefinable quality of "chic" in their clothes and still set the standard of taste for educated women all over the country. Being extremely adaptable and with an absolute genius for acquiring the most delicate nuances of any and every culture they have imbibed what the West has had to offer in every detail and taught the masses of India how to do so themselves. With their pluck, endurance and unlimited resources they have been able to achieve surprising results and have won for themselves thanks to their religion a name all over the world.

In administration, in trade, in education, in charity, in sports, in journalism, in training for the army, in social reform, in awakening the political and industrial conscience of India, in sustaining and encouraging the love of travel, in drama, in starting steamship companies and cotton mills, in sending goods to foreign countries, in introducing changes suited to the country's political needs, in not only obtaining the love of the British public

but gaining recognition from them and making them realise that Parsees were reliable and capable of having the same chivalrous attitude to their women as the English themselves—for all these things Parsees are famous and stand first.

They were pioneers too in political administration and realised that the British connection would be advantageous to India; that contact with the British would be instrumental in widening our horizons both mental, intellectual and in the material field. In the political life of India, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Naoroji Faridoonji, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Sir Dinshaw Wachha, Shapurji Saklatwalla are names which recall great services to the Motherland and along with Sir Hormusjee Adenwalla, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Sir Hormusji Mehta, Sir Phiroze Sethna, Sir Homi Modi and Khurshed Nariman have made Bombay what she is at present. It has been said that politics is "a game from which God is ever absent" but even in this dubious sphere Parsee political leaders have shown a rare spirit of generosity and selflessness, seldom displayed by others. For example, when the reforms under the Government of India Act of 1935 were being discussed they did not unlike the Muslims, the Indian Christians and other minority communities ask for special representation or communal safeguards. It must be remembered when viewing this generous decision that according to the latest census reports the Parsees are only 1,00,000 in number. They could be very easily swamped by "the teeming millions of India" especially as memories among nations are notoriously

short and their services in building up the political, economic and commercial life of the country would be forgotten. They have however, chosen to rely on the fair-mindedness and sense of justice of the other communities and to take their stand on their own merits, their own capacity and greatness. As past history shows whether in British India or in the Native States they have in holding positions of trust and responsibility taken their stand as Indians first and Parsees afterwards. They want to preserve their own individuality but not at the expense of dividing the country into small and separate units. They do not believe in separate electorates and in consequence have been returned to the Bombay Municipality and other public bodies by the help of Hindu voters. Their desire to see India a free and independent nation is genuine and heartfelt, and they visualise a partnership in which their adopted country and Britain stand side by side for each other's benefit and the benefit of humanity in general.

The reasons for this attitude are easily explained and have their roots in the faith that the Parsees have in the fundamental integrity of the average Englishman, in his sense of justice and fairplay. Having been (unlike any other community in India) on terms of social equality with English people they have seen the better side of their character and realised their essential simplicity and goodwill. Their respect for British political institutions is profound and their imitation of British ways and British manners is due entirely to the

admiration they have for all these things. That the Englishman has the good of India at heart seems to them irrefutable. Consequently Gandhian principles and the Congress creed have not appealed to the vast majority of this community who have therefore made no substantial contribution to the fight for political freedom in its later stages. It will however, redound eternally to their credit that it was one of their co-religionists who first pleaded the cause of Indian freedom in the British Parliament, and in the fluctuating tide of politics helped to build up a rational consciousness in this country. It is gross injustice to consider them disloyal or unpatriotic. To the progress and the general uplift of the people they are giving of their best and helping to build the foundations of the new Government. They believe in peaceful and law-abiding methods, however and have therefore not been as enthusiastic about revolutionary doctrines as the rest of India. But, what is most important in this complex economic age they have spread the trade of Hindustan to remote regions, have brought into being new industries and substantially contributed to the prosperity of India.

The achievements of any community, however can only be gauged by the extent of its education and in the character of its individual members. In the educational field also the Parsees have led the way. They early recognised the importance of learning the English language and took advantage of the educational institutions founded by Mountstuart Elphinstone in between 1819 and 1827.

Dadabhai Naoroji and others were among the first batch of brilliant young scholars to emerge from these institutions and with the aid of forceful and invective writing gave an entirely new bias to the political and social life of India. They concentrated on pointing out the defects in the administration and inculcated in the people self-respect and a love of liberty. Preaching continually the benefits of education, not only for themselves but for their womenfolk they achieved the emancipation of their own women to an extent undreamt of by the Indians of that time. Side by side with their fathers, husbands and brothers Parsee women undertook the responsibilities of life, and freed the air of the many degenerating superstitions which clogged the atmosphere due to lack of feminine enlightenment. Though the Parsees had never adopted the purdah system they were on a par with Victorian England in their attitude to women—that attitude which Virginia Woolf has described brilliantly in her stimulating book "Three Guineas" published recently. It typified a sort of protectiveness, an unquestioned sense of superiority, a still more unquestionable expectation of obedience on the part of the male who especially in the sphere of education had all the privileges which were denied to his women. The Parsees were again pioneers in this direction and ungrudgingly made available all possible enlightenment and culture to their womenfolk. No longer was woman considered a mere breeding-machine. She acquired equality of status, was treated with the utmost respect and the old

traditions of this country which had lain dormant for centuries were revived in this respect.

Their cosmopolitan charities earned respect for the Parsees, charity as a virtue has always been highly esteemed from times immemorial but that it should be directed to alleviate human distress without distinction of caste or creed throughout the world exalts the philanthrophist beyond all praise. The Parsees have acquired this virtue as a heritage from their ancestors. Names like Sir Jamshetjee Jijibhoy etc. are carved indelibly on the scroll of time.

It has often been said that a Parsee has only to be born because after that event the community as a whole is prepared to take care of him, should he need assistance, to the day of his death. There is a strong fellow-feeling among them for their co-religionists. The richer feel themselves responsible for the down-and-outs and all over Bombay and elsewhere hospitals, sanatoriums, industrial institutions, free schools are provided for their benefit. Doles in cash are also given, dowries provided for marriageable girls, grain and corn distributed free of charge, free quarters supplied, free medical aid rendered and in the case of bright and promising young people facilities for education in Europe and America and scholarships for further studies provided. Tradesmen can get loans at a very nominal rate of interest to set up in business and work is found for the unemployed or created at a huge cost for the benefit of the needy. The Bombay Presi-



Captain Haines,
the Conqueror of Aden.

dency is studded all over with evidences of Parsee Charity, many of them cosmopolitan in character but one and all bearing witness to the exceptional large-heartedness of the average Parsee. His generosity becomes all the more significant when it is realised that he values riches, knows the advantages it brings and believes in spending his money and having a good time. The pursuit of wealth he considers to be a very desirable one indeed but he has not the miser's love of possessing it for its own sake. He loves just as much to give it away. Whenever famine, flood or earthquake occurs Parsees come forward with the largest and most generous contributions to help people in distress without making any distinction of caste or creed and thank God for giving them an opportunity to do so. In fact what a famous Englishman once observed: "Charity thy name is Parsee" is very true indeed.

Adaptability is another distinguishing trait of this small but versatile community. It is a virtue which has helped them to achieve the position they hold today and which through the stormy seas of conflicting cosmopolitanism which they found in India has stood them in very good stead. They have been as happy under one regime as under another. They have adapted themselves successively to the Moguls, Mahrattas and the British without losing their individuality. As Dr. Mackichan says, "The Parsees have a receptiveness for new ideas and a capacity for their assimilation". Unfortunately, however, this adaptability has of very

recent years degenerated into imitativeness. Ideas are being accepted wholesale from the West without any attempt at selection or application to their own life. It is very much feared that if they do not turn over a new leaf the future is not very bright for the generations to come.

The existence of cricket and other games and sports in Bombay is also due to the Parsees. They took a whole-hearted interest in cricket, followed it up with tennis in which even their women took part and went on to swimming, riding, hunting and other sports. But cricket was their forte and for a century they have distinguished themselves in that game. They have popularised it not only among other communities but the whole of India owes its "sport-mindedness" to them.

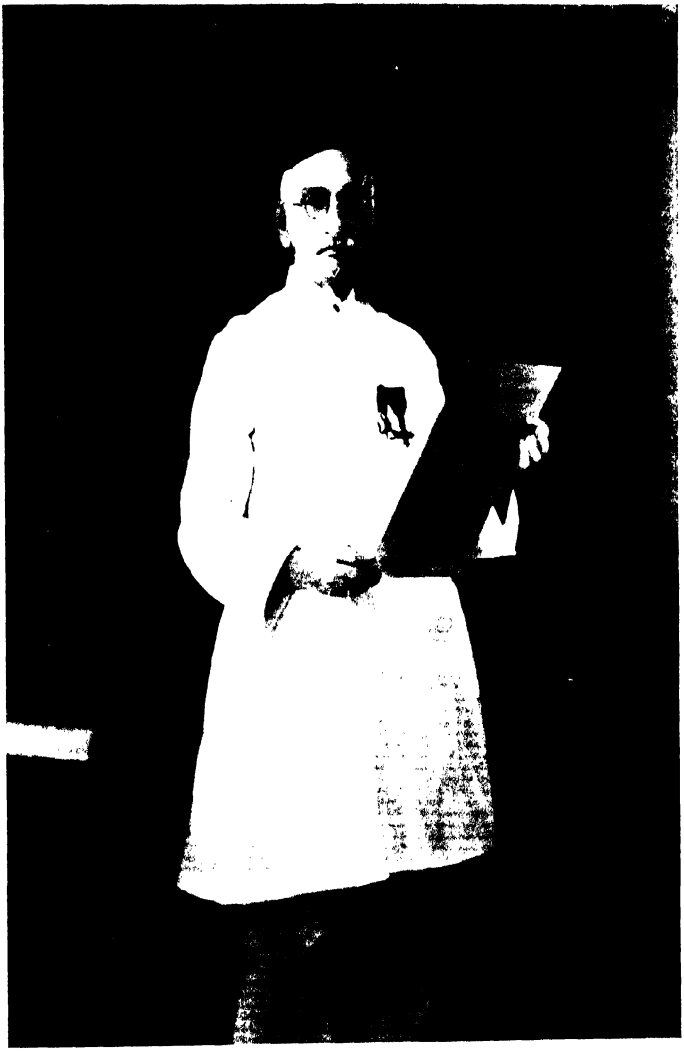
In the field of journalism their share has been great and worthy of note. Presses, type foundries and newspapers were started by the Parsees. In the 19th century the establishment of monthly, daily and weekly papers came about entirely through their efforts and was followed by a great awakening among the masses who for the first time in their lives were brought into touch with world events, with literature, politics, drama and poetry. This impact with new ideals, new ways of thought and with a world in which a new and ennobling civilisation was coming to light profoundly affected the masses of India. Provincialisms vanished like the dust before a storm and in its place a wider, deeper and more humane outlook prevailed. The lead given by Parsees in art, drama and foreign

travel further paved the way for the uprooting of narrow communalism, and that awakening and progressive intellectual enlightenment, more priceless than all the material benefits they have rendered to their adopted country will redound eternally to the credit of this small but gallant race.

It almost seems as if the Parsees of those days had a magic formula for success. Whatever they aimed at they achieved. Many of them still display these qualities and it is a pity that the other communities in India do not follow their methods, for we have much to learn from them. It was a lucky day for this country when they set foot on Indian soil because they have more than fulfilled the pledge they gave to their Indian ruler and have worked heart and soul for the betterment of India. They possess rare virtues—truthfulness, courage, honesty, stability of character, loyalty to their principles, vitality, intelligence if not intellect and that rare quality of "goodwill to men" for which the world is clamouring today. Their defects are due entirely to the unfortunate set backs of their history. Cut off from their motherland, from the culture and traditions of a great Empire, from the artistic and literary heritage of Persia, homeless wanderers, fugitives in a world which accepted them on conditions which struck at the very root of their existence they have yet proved by their grit, their nobility of heart, their gallantry and their indomitable perseverance worthy of the great aristocracy of race to which they belong. One cannot adequately express the admiration one feels for their achieve-

ment and for their leaders whose lives are an object lesson for all time.

Sir Jamsetji Jijibhoy, the first Indian Baronet who by dint of self-reliance, hard work and large and cosmopolitan charities made a name for himself and was known the world over was a man of whom any community might well be proud. His contribution to the welfare of this Country will be remembered as much as that of Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Indian to have a seat in the British Parliament and who devoted his entire existence to giving Indians a sense of self-respect and self-reliance. Then came another great individual whose fighting spirit and courage profoundly impressed his opponents. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta believed in constitutional methods but he was instrumental in achieveing a great deal for India and in consolidating the nation as never before. He was a man of a different stamp from Mr. Jamshetji Tata who laid the foundation of India's industrial life and whose far-sighted vision enabled him to see clearly the benefits which would accrue to millions of Indians if new fields of industry were opened out to them. He devoted all his wealth which was immense to the service not of small communal ventures but to experiments whose scope was nation-wide. He had himself begun life in a small way and built up his fortune by sheer hard work and honesty of purpose. He maintained throughout his life however an extreme simplicity of life and plain living in spite of possessing enormous wealth. He was very much interested in the higher education



Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw,
Kt., O.B.E., M.V.O.

of boys and founded several scholarships for this purpose, as well as libraries and educational institutions.

Another great name is that of Seth Cowasji Dinshaw who also established libraries, schools, dispensaries, fire-temples and literally benefitted thousands of families all over India. Sir Dinshaw Mulla, the legal luminary, Sir Dinshaw Watcha whose political acumen was truly remarkable, Sir Jiwanji Jamshedji Modi the great and learned religious *savant*, Behramji Malbari the eminent social reformer, scholar and poet, Sorabji Bengalee also a reformer, social worker and well-known for his pioneering efforts in the cause of female education, Cursetji Cama, Manekji Cursetji, Dosabhoy Karaka, Jehangir Marzban have all made their name in different spheres of living. Sir Hormusjee Adenwalla who was the first to realise the importance of foreign trade established commercial relations with countries as far distant as Africa, Europe, Aden and the Far East. He became the agent of mill and several shipping companies, military agent, Consul for the Austrian and Portuguese Republics, started the "Back to Iran Movement", is member of several important committees and has worked wholeheartedly for the benefit of his co-religionists. He has had far-reaching influence on every form of social, educational, commercial and literary enterprise. His still youthful enthusiasm, his zest for work, his energy and his unselfish devotion to his public and private duties have been considered remarkable in a man who has just reached the reverend age of eighty-three years.

CHAPTER III

Sir Hormusjee's Parents

IN order to understand and appreciate the life of Sir Hormusjee some reference to his father Seth Cowasji and his mother Bai Jerbai is inevitable. As one who converted Aden from a wild, and poverty-stricken spot to something big, splendid and artistic, who made the wilderness blossom like the rose, as one who indicated the path of cosmopolitan charity regardless of caste or creed and who by dint of industry, self-reliance, self-sacrifice, perseverance and honesty amassed a fortune and carved a name for himself, Seth Cowasji Dinshaw's memory shines like a haloed light and places him in the forefront of all the great men the Parsees have produced. Lives such as his are always a source of inspiration to the world. The lessons to be learnt from them are amongst the most priceless possessions of humanity and those left behind by Seth Cowasji should be considered as a great heritage by the Parsee community and as a beacon to guide its youth along an honourable path.

Seth Cowasji's parents, Dinshawji and Dinbai, were living in humble quarters in the district of Mandvi near Surat when Cowasji was born to them on the 14th September 1827. Although his beginnings were undistinguished he was destined for

Father of Sir Hormusjee.



Seth Cowasji Dinshaw, C.I.E.

B. 14th Sep. 1827 D. 23rd June 1900

great things and to an eminence in his community and in the world at large which he was fated to acquire by his own personal efforts and achievement. Poverty once more played its part in nurturing greatness. It has often been found that those who have lived through want and distress in their earlier days by very reason of the suffering they themselves have endured are enabled to sympathise with that of others, and so Cowasji who had endured poverty in no small measure became the saviour of the needy ones around him.

It is said that Seth Cowasji's fore-father, Seth Rustomji Meherji was originally a resident of Navsari and that his son known as Hormusjee Rustomji *Darjina* came down and settled in Bombay. Hormusjee Seth's eldest son Dinshaji lived in Disa and there started a small business. Finding it unsuitable, however, he settled in Bombay and started a banking concern which flourished extremely well in the beginning of the East India Company. Later on he joined a firm known as Muncherji Edulji Sopariwalla and Sons which did good business in Aden and Bombay. His appointment was a minor one but by dint of his capacity for work he gradually rose to be the manager of the firm, and when Great Britain declared War on Afghanistan he was sent as its accredited representative to Afghanistan in charge of the commisariat. Here he served the British Government with single-minded devotion and unflinching loyalty, traits which he has happily handed down to his des-

cendants and which are very much in evidence among them even today. Indeed, no record of their activities can be said to be complete which does not take stock of their deep-seated loyalty and devotion to the British Government.

Seth Dinshawji retained his post as manager in the firm of Muncherji Edulji till his death in 1860 in which year the idol of the *Parsees* of Aden, the father of Seth Cowasji and Grand father of Sir Hormusjee breathed his last. During his lifetime the family came to be known as *Adenwallas* the descendants of whom have made this important port a stronghold for *Parsees* a place in which they can achieve power, fame and distinction without end. From 1839 onwards it might be said that history of Aden is the history of a few great *Parsees*, their charity, their ability, their capacity and initiative in business ventures and their undoubted grit and honesty of purpose. It cannot be denied that in the building-up of Aden the *Parsees* have played a very large and creditable part.

Seth Cowasji had not received either a liberal or extensive education. He was sent to a single *Gujarati* school conducted by the Students' Literary and Scientific Society but was compelled to leave his studies at the early age of 16 due to his indifferent circumstances. This necessitated his taking up work in a printing press on the amazingly meagre salary of Rs. 3 a month. It must be remembered that those were times, unlike our own when

boys did not go in for higher studies. There was no general intellectual exodus towards the Bachelor of Arts degree and the inevitable stepping-off to medicine or law. Instead they were apprenticed to some firm or another where they started learning the business from the earliest stages and rose gradually but surely to the top. Seth Cowasji like many other pioneers of industry in the West and elsewhere started his life in this fashion.

Those were really the palmy days of the *Parsee* community when young men displayed courage, initiative, self-reliance and proper pride. They strove hard to find new avenues and to strike out for themselves in different directions. They believed in achievement and success as justifications of their existence. They did not stand for easy victories and quick returns but strove hard to attain their ideals relishing the glory of conquest in the face of opposition and almost insurmountable obstacles.

Cowasji typified the best that young men of his age stood for. Though compelled by force of circumstances to take up work as an apprentice in a printing press on an allowance which the poorest menial in Bombay today would disdain to accept, he achiieved fame and prominence to a marked degree. He had a sort of intuitive conviction that he was destined for great things and often mentioned this fact to his friends. It was inevitable that this good, kind, unselfish and determined perso-

nality could not have been meant for this humble job for any length of time. The future loomed before him replete with a million opportunities not only for fashioning his own fortune but helping mankind on its manifold struggles. He was destined too, to beautify Aden and to open new outlets for trade in the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa; to make *Parsee* charity known throughout the length and breadth of Europe and in remote places of the world. Spurred by this inner conviction he decided to give up his magnificently lucrative job in the printing press and emigrate to Aden.

In 1885 on the Good Friday of that year he set his foot in Aden and in that auspicious moment changed its entire history. He worked with great zeal as his father's assistant in the firm of Muncherji Edulji and Sons but with a firm belief in his own destiny which he felt sure would not long let him endure a position of servility. Cowasji knew that slavish occupations of any kind could not be associated with *Parsees* each of whom had been able to build up a successful life of his own on a basis of self-reliance, courage and hard work. Allied to this he had a shrewd and penetrative mind, a capacity to look forward and correctly gauge the trend of events in all their multifarious aspects. On account of his great qualities of mind and heart he was quickly able to make headway and within five years of his arrival at Aden he had started, with the slender resources at his command, a business for himself.

On the same spot where the magnificent offices of the *Adenwallas* now stand, Cowasji built a modest little hut to house his enterprise. He did everything himself and personally supervised all details even though it entailed spending most of the day on horseback. This power of endurance coupled with his untiring zeal and energy were responsible for the success he achieved in life. As the years rolled on a larger number of steamers arrived in port and this enabled him to increase his business. Later on due principally to his reputation for honesty and fair dealing he obtained large military contracts from the British Government. He brought to this work as to everything he did so much perseverance and integrity that his name became a byword for these qualities throughout Aden and beyond. So much so in fact that the Political Resident of the Government in Aden presented him with a very expensive clock as a token of appreciation for his services and the spirit in which they had been rendered. In 1854 Cowasji entered into a partnership with his brother Dorabji and from that date the firm was known as Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers. The firm has become a legend not only in the British Empire but its fame has reached all the five continents of the globe. It has extensive business connections and represents several prominent shipping companies in important Asiatic and African towns. Branches of the firm are to be found in Bombay, Zela Bulhar, Kishmayu and Somaliland. It owns six large steamships and carries on foreign trade with great success. In

Aden today no business concern can equal it in the reputation Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers have acquired for honest dealing and integrity nor have the resources of the firm been paralleled by another in Aden. It has besides played a very large part in the development of this port in every direction.

Scarcity of water has always been the major problem confronting the authorities in Aden. When Cowasji was at the helm of affairs this scarcity was far more pronounced than it is today. But with his usual determination and spirit of service he set himself to tackle the problem and entirely on his own responsibility started a project for converting the salt sea water into good drinking water. Another for the manufacture of ice (invaluable in a place where the temperature rises from 94 to 100 in summer) and a third for making salt from sea water. For this purpose he ordered machinery at his own expense from Europe which involved a very large sum of money but which made life infinitely more liveable for the local population and enhanced his prestige and good name.

Cowasji not only had a banking department in his firm but also a post and telegraph office and undertook various other activities and utilitarian projects. In his firm he employed several young *Parsees* and continued doing so in greater numbers as the business expanded. The poorer classes especially had reasons to bless him for they found employment in increasing numbers in the firm and

they were treated as members of his own family with extreme kindness and consideration.

Gradually as Aden became one of the chief trading centres in the world new contacts were established by the firm of Cowasji Dinshaw with the important commercial cities of the East and West. The importance of the firm increased so much that several of the partners were asked to represent in a Consular capacity Austria, Portugal and Spain and barring Spain this right is accorded to them even at the present day.

In 1867 and 1882 at the time of the Abyssinian Expedition and Suakim Expedition respectively invaluable services were rendered to the British Government by the *Adenwallas*. During the Suakim Expedition, the Admiralty had so much faith in the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers that they wired Cowasji to intercept some special ship passing through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. Fortunately, there was no occasion to intercept as the ship arrived at Aden. The *Adenwallas* helped to maintain not only its prestige but were mainly instrumental in bringing the struggle to a successful close. The terms in which Government expressed their appreciation of all this help were such as might well evoke pleasure and pride in any human being. When the Port Trust was founded in 1889 Cowasji was appointed a Trustee a privilege which his descendants enjoy up to the present time.

In the pursuit of expanding his trade Seth Cowasji left no stone unturned which was even remotely likely to benefit his business. He spent lavishly where he considered such expenditure necessary because as an economist he knew that wealth breeds wealth and multiplies itself when discreetly laid out. He accordingly bought for a very large sum of money a steamship which could carry passengers and cargo to various ports, and called it "*Bartle Frere*" after the then Governor of Bombay. Later on he launched on a much bigger venture when in 1895 he ordered a huge floating dock from England. This was a landmark in the history of shipping in Aden, which was the history of the firm. Aden possessed an ideal harbour and as most of Cowasji's business interests were connected with shipping he deemed it expedient to lay out this enormous sum of money on a venture of this kind. The opening ceremony was performed by the Resident of Aden, General Jope and the place was christened '*Dinshaw Pontoon*' in memory of Seth Cowasji's deceased father whose name was constantly before the public mind because of the greatness and nobility of his son. *Parsees* ever since the advent of the British in India had been noted for their knowledge and acumen connected with Shipping but this enterprise was far beyond anything that they had even achieved.

In the nineteenth century, there were signs of a notable increase in trade between Eastern and European countries, and here again the firm of

Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers took a very prominent part. They acquired prestige in the commercial world and started new connections with foreign countries. Any member of the British Royal Family, Viceroys, Governors and big officials have always been welcomed to the shores of Aden by the head of the firm.

In and outside Aden Seth Cowasji on account of his vigour, energy, foresight and honesty amassed great wealth. He was responsible not only for beautiful Aden but it meant to him what Birmingham meant to Joseph Chamberlain. To his untiring efforts and inspiring example and guidance Aden owes the proud position she occupies as the premier harbour of the Empire. Cowasji has made a great and lasting contribution to the building up of that Empire and his name will always be remembered among its finest and greatest architects as long as the Union Jack is flown over that soil.

In recognition of his loyalty to the British Empire, his deep-seated respect and affection for the Crown, his great services to Aden, his great personal qualities, his charity which took no heed of caste or nationality and of his steady striving for the good of mankind he was made a Commander of the Indian Empire in 1894.

His services to his community were not less deserving of praise. His prestige as a great merchant prince, his sympathy for his own and other communities, his untiring efforts to alleviate

distress wherever he found it were traits which deserve the highest encomiums from all mankind. Seth Cowasji had all the qualities which are needed to make "a perfect gentleman". He followed the dictates of his religion and with his quiet dignity, his generous idealism, and singleness of purpose he was an example to his community and to all men. His loyalty to the Crown and his respect for British traditions and ways of life were exceptional.

There was no fire-temple or Tower of Silence to which he did not willingly contribute and his deep faith in the religion of his forefathers was truly worthy of respect and imitation.

In the educational sphere he was responsible for starting libraries; he also built several fire-temples and dispensaries. When the plague first broke out in Bombay he distributed large quantities of medicine for this fell disease. Seth Cowasji was particularly interested in female education and gave every possible encouragement to young men who desired to be writers. He sank wells where these were required and gave several youths a footing in life so that they were enabled to earn their own living decently. All his interests and actions were such that they cast a lustre on the community to which he belonged.

It is not possible to deal here in detail with his multifarious charities or achievements but some reference to it can be made. Although Seth Cowasji believed in cosmopolitan charities he also did a

great deal for the members of his own community, particularly to start with, as was but natural. In this he took his cue from his ancestors who were all well-known for their generosity and lived and acted according to their traditions.

In 1854 in memory of his first wife, Baiai he built a fire-temple in Aden. A few years later when a *Parsee* library was started he contributed liberally to its upkeep and maintenance besides giving away large sums to different institutions in memory of his mother on her Uthamna day. His next gift consisted of 1,600 volumes valued at Rs. 7,000 to the Students' Reading Room founded by Sir Dinshaw Watcha in Bombay. This section of the library was called Cowasji Dinshaw Reading Room and for its maintenance he set aside a further sum of Rs. 15,000. In 1875 when Edward, Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward the Seventh) came to India, Cowasji contributed to the dispensary fund in Aden to commemorate his visit. In 1884 he re-built a fire-temple in Aden and the following year a free hospital in memory of his beloved wife Jerbai which was splendidly equipped and endowed with Rs. 50,000 for its upkeep. Even today the Hospital is doing splendid work and under the careful, personal supervision of Sir Hormusjee several changes for the better have been effected. All communities and classes in Aden have taken advantage of this Institution which has been a real boon to the residents of Aden. His donations to Dr. Bahadurji and the Sir J. J. Hospital on the

outbreak of plague in Bombay were munificent as was also his gift of Rs. 41,596 in charity on the Uthamna of his beloved wife Bai Jerbai and his contribution of Rs. 25,000 to the construction of the *Anjuman* Fire Temple. His interest in female education was always profound and he helped the Alexandra Native Girls' Institution very liberally. In Gujarat several wells were sunk at his expense and when in 1899 famine raged through that province the Relief Fund benefitted substantially through Seth Cowasji's contribution. In the same year he built a fire-temple at Lonavla for his co-religionists, so that his charity was not only cosmopolitan but may be truly said to extend in all directions.

In 1900, on the 23rd of June, in his beautiful residence Adenwalla Bag Seth Cowasji breathed his last. The grief which was felt at his death by all classes and conditions of people bore ample testimony to his nobility, his greatness, his generosity and to a life which had been essentially lived for the benefit of mankind.

Dastur Kaikhusroo Jamasp in his funeral oration said: "His charity is world famous. He has helped to keep alight the torch of the Zoroastrian religion by building fire-temples to house the sacred fire which has always been to Man, a symbol of God. It is not for us to reward such deeds, nor can we mete out to this great soul any just reward for his deeds on earth. But we can keep his memory

Mother of Sir Hormusjee



Mrs Jerbai Cowasji Dinshaw.

Died 1891.

green by reciting his name in our religious ceremonies. Seth Cowasji has also rendered invaluable services to his poor co-religionists by helping them when help was required. His entire life was inspired by the tenets of our faith which proclaim 'Inasmuch as a man is charitable he shall enter the Kingdom of God' .....".

Prof. Jackson truly observes that there is no community in the world which can rival or remotely match the *Parsees* in charity, in large-heartedness, in generosity and this is mainly due to the precepts laid down by their religion.

Seth Cowasji's Uthamna ceremony was performed in Aden, Zanzibar, Lonavla, Navsari and Chikhli and about Rs. 95,000 were given away for charitable purposes on this occasion by his children.

His wife Bai Jerbai was an exemplary woman, kind, unselfish, lavish of sympathy where sympathy was needed. Her simplicity, her profound religious faith, her unfailing courtesy and gentleness were admirable. Her death in 1891 at the age of sixty was a great blow to Cowasji for whom all public activity ceased from that date. He had lost in her a helpful guide, a really charming companion, an understanding friend and he felt like a ship tossed rudderless about on the waves.

The eight children who resulted from their marriage were called Hormusjee, Dinshaw, Kaikobad,

Sorabji, Shavakshaw, Cooverbai, Aimai and Shirinbai. To them these noble parents had passed on a heritage of selflessness, kindness, generosity, simplicity, universal love and the highest principles of equity and justice. These virtues are especially noticeable in Sir Hormusjee who has not only followed carefully in his father's footsteps but has enlarged his sphere of activity in every direction. Even in the domain of material things he has achieved success of which any man might well be proud. He has raised the firm to the highest pinnacle of glory and in all matters has been a worthy son of a noble father.

Before completing the sketch of the life of this great gentleman one is tempted to draw a comparison between him and his two illustrious contemporaries: Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, the first *Parsee* baronet and Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the first *Parsee* member of Parliament. In the romantic careers of all these three great men one notices the same qualities of courage, patience, honesty, perseverance and truth, qualities which helped them to bear the burdens of life and to achieve success in their different spheres of work. Their lives are a source of inspiration to all and should prove particularly so to the young men of their community. The great ethical truth which one learns from their lives is that every man who holds fast unto righteousness may rise from the humblest position on earth to riches and wealth. Not only have these men added lustre to their community, but to the country of their adoption and to the world at large—Sir

Jamsetji in the field of charity, Seth Cowasji in the domain of religion and Dr. Dadabhoy Naoroji in the sphere of patriotic activities. They have not only led lives distinguished by moral and spiritual greatness but have left a legacy to the Indian nation more valuable by far than Silver or Gold.

CHAPTER IV

Sir Hormusjee's Birth, Childhood and Education.

HORMUSJEE was born on the 4th of April 1857 in Bombay. His parents being well-to-do he was given an expensive education the best that India afforded in his days. Those were troubled years, clouds were threatening on the political horizon and a critical period in the Government of the country had been reached. Attempts had been made to throw off the British yoke in consequence of which the laws had been made harsher and the attempt which had proved a failure only brought about more repressive legislation in its train. Bombay however escaped these troubles and the work of the Commercial firms established by Cowasji Dinshaw at Aden went on apace. Its prosperity was on the increase and the birth of a son at this period was considered to be a particularly auspicious event by the family. Hormusjee had a happy, healthy childhood full of innocent mirth and enjoyment and as the eldest son of the family in whom all their dearest hopes centred he was doted upon by his parents. He has still very happy recollections of his childhood and recalls with pride the affection lavished on him by his parents. He has often detailed to the present writer the singular love his father had for the poor, so that no one who went to him for help ever returned empty-handed, and

how he considered himself amply rewarded by their blessings and this kindness of heart was naturally extended to a greater degree to his son who remembers how his every wish was granted and no disappointments or failures came his way.

Hormusjee was singularly fortunate as far as his parents were concerned. His mother was kind, capable, modest and unselfish and his father affectionate, generous and liberal-minded. They passed on to him all those virtues which have enabled him since to devote his life to good works and to helping the poor. All his numerous activities, helping educational institutions, doing his bit for the country, leading his life on principles of equity, justice and a tender-hearted imaginative sympathy for those in trouble are manifestations of that splendid heritage of virtue which his parents passed on to him.

His education was wisely directed. That nice balance between the physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of personality which is the ideal basis for education was maintained in his case. It prevented that lop-sidedness which is the bane of Indian youth to-day. Cowasji who had himself been through similar training well knew that adverse experiences are very necessary to develop character and he saw to it that his son's upbringing should not be so soft as to make him helpless in later years to face life.

Hormusjee was extremely interested in sport and games. There used to be in those days a physical culture institute conducted by Mr. Nusserwanji

Kerawalla, somewhere near Crawford Market. *Hormusjee went there daily.* He also took up riding at an early age and has been one of the best swimmers of his time. Walking and mountain climbing he added to his attainments and took wholeheartedly to every form of physical activity. He owes to this his splendid and radiant vitality which at 83 gives him the energy and strength denied to many younger men. One must mention here the strange fascination *gillidanda* had for Hormusjee. He still maintains its superiority to cricket in many ways.

Luckily, none of the handicaps which had marked his father's education were present in his case. As soon as India was brought politically under British rule universities were founded in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and batches of boys took advantage of the facilities they offered. A knowledge of Western art, literature and Western culture could be acquired at these places and even the old-fashioned schools run by *Mehtajis* were replaced by others run on Western lines. Hormusjee, however did have a taste of the former type of school. The very first one he went to was conducted by Madhuram *Mehtaji* in the Fort somewhere near the Shapurji Sheth Chakla where *Gujarati* was taught. He went on from there to the Fort High School owned by Seth Manekji Bejanji Cooper and then to the Elphinstone School from where he matriculated with Latin as his second language, earning distinctions for himself.

Hormusjee in his school days was what you might call a "model student". He was hard-working, industrious, persevering and had an inquiring and original mind, his interest in games saved him from being a prig and gave him that alertness by means of which he was enabled to take advantage of every opportunity that life offered and of making it a success.

His contact with boys of different classes in the four schools which he had attended and later on in college helped him to understand human nature, its weaknesses and foibles. He could gauge the exaggerations and enthusiasms of youth and forgive them. He could gauge the trend of public opinion. This stood him in good stead in his future life and made him a helpful, shrewd and beneficial influence in the community.

Cowasji Seth believed that education did not consist merely in sending children to expensive schools and that other things besides mere book-learning were necessary. He selected men of experience to be his son's tutors. Men too, who leavened his instruction with idealism and impressed on him the duty men owe to their fellow-men. The child was never indulged though all his needs were met and by this admirable combination of kindness and discipline could not but help growing up to be the pride of his people.

During his school and college days Hormusjee showed signs of his future greatness and his teachers

were able to foretell his success in the years to come. His popularity among his school fellows was great on account of his simplicity, good temper, unselfishness and a keen sense of humour. In his high school days through hard work and steady application he laid the foundation of his career. He had an ambition to go to England and study at Cambridge and be a legal luminary. With this object he left Elphinstone College and proceeded to Aden and then to England with his father. Cowasji wanted to give his son an education which would help him in his career. He knew the advantages to be derived from studying at a British university and he was convinced that higher education brought out the best in a man. The close contact between professor and pupil was to their mutual advantage and the discussions between the pupils themselves on various subjects increased their knowledge and widened their outlook considerably. Cowasji intended giving his son this type of education but when he went to London he felt that the earlier the boy took up the work of the firm which was widening every day it would be to his interest. So the Cambridge idea was given up and Hormusjee was taken under his father's wing and taught all those things which would be useful to him in his business career. He was given a job in London and in his father he found a guide who tackled most ably all the problems which faced him at the start. With his father's able assistance he developed all those qualities so essential to the head of a large and influential business firm. Looking back on

this one realises how wise a step this was and how with these qualities Sir Hormusjee was able to amass a large fortune and to use it for the good of his community and his motherland and to display that singular generosity which has been recognised as stupendous by social and political leaders throughout the country.

In London Sir Hormusjee became a student of King's College. In the evenings he regularly attended lectures on Industry and during the day worked at the famous business firm of James Barber and Sons where he was apprenticed. He remained there for a year and half learning a great deal about English business methods in all the different departments of the firm. He also came in close contact with several good English families which brought him many pleasant interludes. In 1878 the son of Captain Hains of Aden (a great friend of Seth Cowasji) invited him to live in his beautiful country house in the lovely country of Westmoreland. This gave him an opportunity to see "the glories of the English countryside" and further opportunities of this kind also helped to enliven his stay in England.

During that period he mastered all branches of commercial knowledge and gained practical experience at Barber's after which he was sent to Paris where he was apprenticed to the famous firm of Messrs. Leopold Bing Fils and Gans. Here he remained for six months and was able to acquire remarkable control over the French language

which he still retains. Sir Hormusjee often asserts that the works of Victor Hugo have profoundly affected his life along with the Shakesperean dramas and the novels of Sir Walter Scott.

In Paris Sir Hormusjee found unlimited opportunities of broadening his outlook, extending his knowledge, contracting new ideas and he made the fullest possible use of these opportunities. His pluck, mental alertness and boundless energy stood him in good stead. The experience he acquired helped him in later life when the responsibility for running the firm devolved on him and he brought it to a stage where it acquired an international reputation and was respected everywhere. Now at 83, he is able to recall his earlier years with a feeling of intense satisfaction and pride. They marked an achievement of which any man might well be proud and were besides literally sprinkled with happy times. Before Sir Hormusjee proceeded to England he married his cousin Manekbai, the daughter of Seth Nusserwanji Cooverji Erskine a lady gifted with a remarkably unselfish and sympathetic nature.

These traits are particularly evident in Sir Hormusjee also. No record of his life can be complete which does not stress this fact as well as his extreme affection for his parents, his relatives, his family and his detailed consideration for every one. He is like some grand old patriarch of old, reigning by love, sympathy, affection and solicitude his

children, grand-children, and scores and scores of people round about.

This generation accustomed to living in little separate homes dedicating itself selfishly to its own interests, concerned with its own pleasures does not favour the joint family system. Sir Hormusjee in whose house it still persists believes that if all the family members strive and work together for the general good this brings an added sweetness and harmony in life. Under his own roof young and old alike are living in peace, contentment and harmony loved by all, respected by all and owing everything to the revered head of the family whose conduct of his public as well as his domestic affairs is worthy of admiration and respect.

CHAPTER V

Sir Hormusjee's Public Activities and Business Career

IN 1879 after his return from Europe Sir Hormusjee joined his father's firm in Aden and from the start displayed great business abilities. The experience and grounding he has acquired in Europe stood him in great stead and he harnessed these to his work so that the business considerably expanded and branches were established in India and Africa.* The African market was made available for certain Indian goods, and trade between the two countries went on due to Sir Hormusjee's initiative. Fourteen years later he was made a partner in the firm until his father's death in 1900 when he was appointed chief his brothers and cousins being partners. Under his distinguished leadership the firm increased in splendour and the scope of its influence widened considerably. His brothers and cousins have been placed in charge of various branches and they work with one accord to the greater glory of this concern. Their one object is to

* "Sir Hormusjee's name is associated with vast achievements in the sphere of trade and shipping not merely in India but abroad. On his return from Europe, Sir Hormusjee joined his father's firm and soon displayed ability of a higher order. He brought all his knowledge and experience of business derived during his stay in Europe to bear on his work and quickly under his inspiration and initiative his business expanded further in Africa and India." A. N. Joshi.

increase its prosperity, transact business on a stupendous scale so that it might be considered one of the finest ventures run by Indians in this sphere. Actually it compares very favourably indeed with any European enterprise in the way it has maintained its prestige, its integrity and in the happy relationship which exists between the employed and the employer.

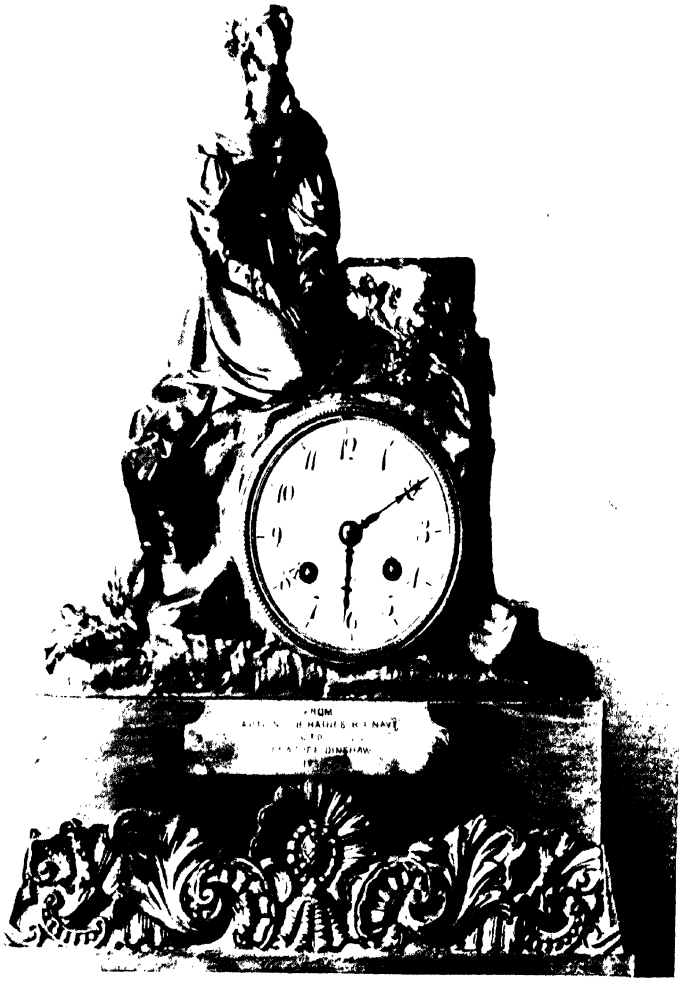
The firm deals in exports and imports besides being bankers, naval agents, shipowners, managing agents for mills and steamship companies such as the Bombay Persia Steam Navigation Co., British India Steam Navigation Co. and other British Italian Dutch and Norwegian Shipping Companies.* Its reputation has spread far and wide. They own six large steamships Tuna, Ayamonte, Dupleix, Filkan, Africa and Weidcock which sail through the Red

* "The firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Bros., has correspondence with various cities of India, Africa, Europe and the United States of America. It has six steamers running to the Red Sea Ports, Somalilands, and Zanzibar. It has a floating dock of its own and has an extensive workshop. It has a floating plant of over 40 barges and six tugs. It has connection with Messrs. Luke, Thomas & Co., Ltd., of London, who are dealing largely in coal, condensed water and ice. The firm are doing business as Naval Agents, Merchants, Bankers, Ship-Owners, Managing Agents of several mills and Shipping Agents of the following shipping companies:—1. The British India Steam Navigation Company, Limited, 2. The Bombay and Persia Steam Navigation Company, Limited, 3. Stoomwart Maatschappij-Nederland, 4. Rotterdam Lloyd-Royal Mail Line, 5. Holland Africa Line, 6. Honinklijke Poketvaart Maatschappij; & 7. Barber Steamship Lines Incorporated. The firm are also interested in Messrs. Hajeebhoy Aden Salt Works, Ltd." A. N. Joshi.

Sea, visit every port in the Gulf of Aden and go as far as South as Zanzibar. A floating dock specially brought out from England and fixed up at Aden served as a foothold for minor damages to steamships until trade having considerably expanded a larger one capable of holding steamers weighing 1,400 tons was substituted at Sir Hormusjee's suggestion and named after his father. During the Great War Sir Hormusjee presented the dock to the British admiralty by whom it was sent to Cyprus where it served a useful and beneficial purpose. The British navy was grateful for this magnanimous gift.

The firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Bros.* are agents for the Burhanpur Tapti Mills Co. and they have business connections with Luke Thomas & Co. of London and the Messrs. Hajeebhoy Salt Works installed at Aden.

* "Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers, are agents for the Burhanpur Tapti Mills Company, Ltd., whose mills are situated on the Tapti River at Burhanpur in the district of Nimar in the Central Provinces. The company was formed by Messrs. Hajeebhoy and Co., of Bombay and the management of the concern was transferred to Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers in the year 1915..... The whole of the machinery which is driven by steam power is up-to-date in every respect, and there are 20,000 spindles and 500 looms.....The mills are admirably situated with regard to obtaining their average monthly requirement of 800 bales of raw material, as Burhanpur is in the centre of a large area which is noted especially for its cotton producing capabilities. Local markets chiefly in the Central Provinces, provide an excellent outlet for all manufactured products.....The capital of the Company consists of 10 lakhs of rupees, all fully subscribed and about 1,200 hands are constantly employed." A. N. Joshi.



Historic Clock presented by Captain Haines to
Messrs Cowasjee Dinshaw and Bros., Aden

In 1890 the King of Portugal bequeathed the title of *Knight Commander of the Royal Military Order of our Lady Conception of Villa Vicorza* on Sir Hormusjee in recognition of his partnership in the firm of Cowasji Dinshaw and Bros. He had the rare distinction of being appointed Consul in Aden for Portugal, Spain and Austria. Considering that he was neither a Portuguese, Spanish or Austrian national this was a unique honour. As Consul when Sir Hormusjee visits the men-of-war he receives a salute of 7 guns and Consulate flags wave merrily over the Head Offices of this distinguished firm.

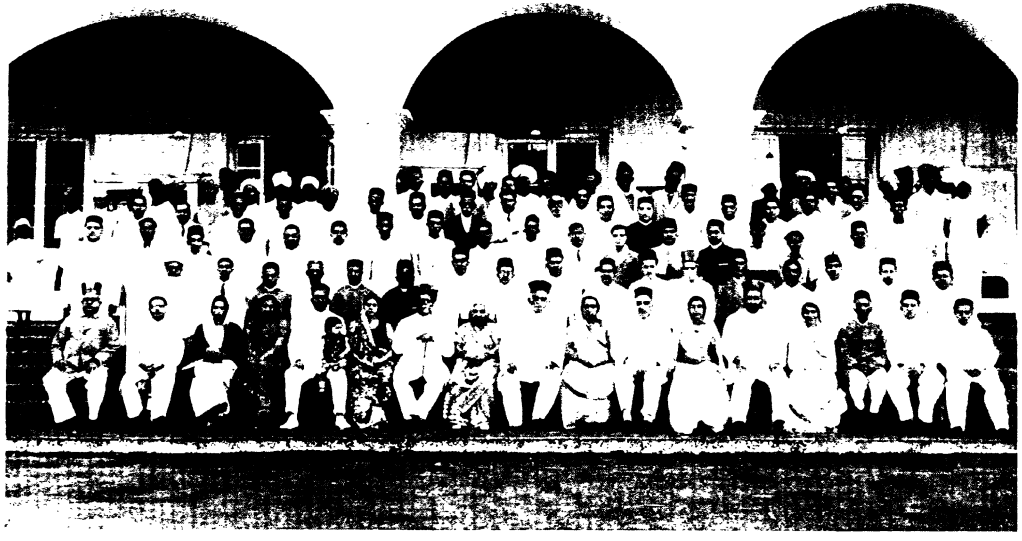
The life of this concern is in a certain sense the life of Sir Hormusjee himself. Having been started three years before his birth it has now completed the 85th year of its existence. The head office is at Aden and branches have been established in fourteen different places which carry on trade with all the capitals of Europe and all the great cities of the world. Like a giant bunyan tree it has spread its roots far and wide and its turnover amounts to lacs of rupees every year, and at the core of this lyrical achievement the life and soul of this great concern is Sir Hormusjee himself. It is round him that the whole venture revolves. He forms the connecting link welding together the thousand diverse units of this vast organisation. He is like some grand old patriarch of ancient days dispensing sympathy, kindliness, help to his poor co-religionists and to his countrymen. He and his brothers have inherited all those qualities for which their father was famous

and have maintained in their private and public life the best traditions of that illustrious gentleman. The scope which the firm provides to its employers to acquire practical commercial training helps them to secure jobs elsewhere and thus silently and surely the good work proceeds redounding to the credit of the organisers. An address presented to Sir Hormusjee on the occasion of his receiving the title of M.V.O. was worded as follows:

> "During your father's lifetime he put you at the helm of this old and important firm believing you to be a suitable person and that with your skill, forethought courtesy and humility you would be a shining light in your firm: at the same time he knew that your great qualities of head and heart would win over the affections of all communities and this belief and faith you have fully justified. You have done and are still doing much for the betterment and welfare of your employees and co-workers. Your generosity, kindliness, your unostentations charity are too well known to demand repetition, but we are nevertheless deeply mindful of these as well as of your great services to the public at large."

To this Sir Hormusjee answered:

> "Brothers, I too was like you an employee for 14 years when I gathered experience and learnt how to serve with honesty, fidelity and devotion. In the position to which God has seen fit to appoint me I have been trying my utmost to help all of you who have served me so loyally and well and it is source of gratification to me that I have succeeded to a certain extent. It gives me great satisfaction to see the good effect the establishment of the Provident Fund has had on our workers. The fact that the number of those working faithfully for the good of the firm



Sitting on the Chair from the left:

Mr. K.C. Lakdi, Mr. G.A. Taraporewalla, Miss Manekbai F.H.C. Dinshaw, Miss Alanmai F.H.C. Dinshaw Mr. Cowasji R. Dinshaw and Child, Mrs. Gulbai Cowasji R. Dinshaw, Seth Rustomji D. Dinshaw, Mrs. Aima R. D. Dinshaw, Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw, Kt., Behen Alanmai, Seth Framroz H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Makk N. H. C. Dinshaw, Seth Nusserwanji H. C. Dinshaw, Mrs. Frenibai N. H. C. Dinshaw, Mr. M. F. Aibara Mr. M. R. Bhownagree, and Mr. J. N. Dotiwalla.

is on the increase speaks well for the future of this concern. It is not eough that the honest employee should influence all those about him. This is very necessary to the welfare of the firm. The present success of our venture is not due to me or to my brothers, but is the result of the care, industry and honesty which old and trustworthy employees have given and for this I am grateful. You must remember that we have to compete with other European concerns and in order to do this successfully we must display enthusiasm, honesty, skill and perseverance in our task. If we fall short in this our European agencies no matter how long our connection with them will be lost to us. Day by day competitive factors in our business are on the increase and one has to do twice as much work as formerly in order to give satisfaction. In times like these men of integrity are a great asset and our firm considers itself fortunate to be able to obtain such assistants."

On that occasion Sir Hormusjee spoke with great sympathy, affection and kindness about the relationship which should exist between the employees and the employer. Another opportunity for voicing his views occurred when in 1922 the honour of knighthood was conferred upon him. He spoke to his staff in the following terms:

"I must take this opportunity to thank those old and faithful workers who have worked so hard to increase the prosperity of this firm. I will not fail to thank God that we are able to compete with other European concerns. The responsibility of maintaining the status of our venture is on the shoulders of the younger generation and on you and I am confident that you will do your best to maintain its present position. If you will always co-operate with your masters and assistants, show great respect,

courtesy and fidelity and be willing to give help when called upon to do so the connections of this firm whether in Aden or elsewhere will always be maintained and extended. The great industrial set back which the world has just experienced has its repercussions in the turnover of business in Aden and in our firm. Business has been steadily decreasing until we have with difficulty managed to square our budget and balance our income and expenditure. The owners of our various concerns have had to fall back on the surplus of previous years and yet they have not like other Indian firms thought of any form of retrenchment either by decreasing the number of workers or effecting a cut in their salaries, and I hope that God in His infinite mercy will never render such a step inevitable in our firm. I hope that you, gentlemen, the old and trusted employees of this concern will co-operate whole-heartedly with us to prevent any wasteful expenditure and will continue to work with greater zeal to bring back our former prosperity. Besides with the world wide depression in trade we are faced with increasing competition day by day. But as we have managed somehow to overcome difficulties in the past I feel sure that with your co-operation we shall emerge successfully out of the crisis we are facing just now."

In every sentence of Sir Hormusjee's thoughtful speech one can observe his great business capacity, his deep and accurate knowledge, and his understanding and sincere sympathy for his employees.

This concern at Aden employs nearly a hundred Parsees on substantial salaries. Many have become old and grey in its service and remaining faithful to their work are still giving of their best to their work. The employees receive free board and lodg-

ing in addition to their salaries and are treated with a kindness respect and consideration hardly to be met with in business concerns. The whole staff dines at one table presided over by one or other of the *Adenwallas* and this helps to create the team spirit and feelings of gratitude, loyalty and devotion all of which are instrumental in creating the right atmosphere for all concerned. In this old and historic firm several Parsees have retired after accumulating quite tidy fortunes and in their stead have been appointed younger men who display diligence aptitude and energy in their work. The different members of the Adenwalla family have worked for it with great zeal and enthusiasm and this has had a subtle and beneficial influence on the staff. We can safely prophesy that if such relations exist between the employers and employed in all parts of the world there would be none of the struggle between capital and labour that we see today. Large sums are given in charity by this firm. For the last thirty years Rs. 10,000 are distributed every year on Sir Hormusjee's birthday to his faithful Zoroastrian workers and others. This custom has been maintained to the present day and will be kept up in the future.

In Aden's public life also Sir Hormusjee has played a vital and important part.* His activities

* "Sir Hormusjee has played a wonderful part in the transformation of Aden from the state of poverty and neglect in which it was found to be at the time of its occupation by the British in the year 1839 to its present important position as a thriving, shipping and commercial port, as a well-regulated town and a credit to the British Empire. Many of the modern improvements in Aden are due largely to Sir Hormusjee's influence and far-sightedness." A. N. **Joshi.**

commenced after the death of his father and these were so far reaching and intensive that the history of Aden may truly be said to be the life of Sir Hormusjee himself. In International politics, in its political, industrial and religious activities, in the educational and social sphere, in the *Parsee Panchayet* and *Anjuman*, the Port Trust, the Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality and all charitable institutions in Aden he has always been to the forefront. His private as well as official life has been marked by extreme simplicity, sagaciousness and foresight and all these elements have combined to render his name a byword for all the virtues throughout the length and breadth of Aden and India.

His speech made on the occasion of his appointment to the Presidentship of the Parsee *Panchayet* at Aden reflects his progressive and liberal views. He said:

> "Gentlemen, wherever I look around I see young faces. We young men have now been put at the helm of affairs and it behoves us to carry on the duties with which we have been entrusted and conduct the affairs of the *Anjuman* with the same integrity, honesty of purpose and grit which our ancestors displayed. They have left behind them huge funds and it is up to us to emulate their example, to drown our petty animosities and work in a spirit of comradeship and tolerance for the general good."

During his tenure of office as president of the *Panchayet* in Aden Sir Hormusjee more than carried out the precepts which he set down to his colleagues at the start. The unity and material welfare

of the community in Aden bear ample testimony to his work. He was tactful in handling disputes and brought many a risky duel to a successful close. It was his diplomacy which smoothed over the crisis when two rival factions rose in the *Anjuman* and attempts were made to set up a new party in Aden. He succeeded in instilling in all Adenites a sense of loyalty devotion to one another and a spirit of camaraderie.

Taking into consideration Sir Hormusjee's selfless and useful services the British, Portuguese, Spanish, Austrian and Abyssinian Governments gave him several titles, medals, certificates and *Sanads* as tokens of appreciation. The general public in Aden, the *Parsee Anjuman*, his staff and the employees of several branches of his firm also gave him addresses to express all that they owed to his kindness and consideration. This was followed in 1902 by Sir Hormusjee being given the Certificate of Merit at Aden. He was presented with the M.V.O. by King George the Fifth in 1912 and the people of Aden took advantage of this opportunity to organise in his honour a public reception and to present him with a congratulatory address.

Replying to this Sir Hormusjee said:

> "I have no words with which to thank you sufficiently for the very kind feelings you have expressed towards me. You have over-estimated the amount of work I have done and I sincerely wish I could be worthy of all the nice things you say about me. When I first heard of your proposal to give me an address I must confess I was rather dis-

pleased as I do not like public testimonials though I appreciate the sincerity and kindness which inspires them. However, when a deputation of the merchants of Aden waited upon me I felt it would be churlish to refuse what was offered in so kindly a spirit and I thank you for this gesture of your esteem and appreciation. Being in constant touch with my revered father I have observed at first hand what the duties of a citizen should be and I have tried my utmost to emulate that example. It gives me the greatest possible satisfaction to know that I have in some measure succeeded in my efforts, and I also realise that your kind and continued co-operation have to a great extent contributed to that success. During the long years in which we have worked together—a period of 33 years—I have always considered it my duty to work for the common good and whatever sacrifice of personal convenience it may have involved I have considered that sacrifice well spent."

The *Parsee Anjuman* also celebrated the event by holding a dinner in Sir Hormusjee's honour, the Goanese community (specially because he was Consul for Portugal) organised a reception in his honour as did the merchants of Hodeida on all of which occasions Sir Hormusjee spoke in that happy and felicitous style which is so peculiarly his own.

In 1918 Sir Hormusjee received the O.B.E. and in 1922 a Knighthood in recognition of his great services and his loyalty to the Crown. Considering the record of his activities one cannot but say that rarely has a distinction been so well deserved, and that his merit really went far beyond the symbol by which it was recognised.

This tribute from the Government proved another occasion for his friends and admirers to fete Sir Hormusjee and the staff and agents of the Burhanpur Tapti Mills Ltd., the staff of Cowasji Dinshaw and Bros. organised a memorable reception in his honour, and presented him with an address. To this Sir Hormusjee replied as follows:

> "I stand before you as your friend for those who are connected with the Burhanpur Tapti Mills and Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw & Bros. have unfailingly given me valuable assistance and encouragement. You have referred to my efforts in safeguarding the commercial interests of the Arab as well as the Indian communities in Aden. I see the hand of God in making me the leader of the various communities and as a loyal subject of the Crown I have thought it my pious duty to stand behind you in your struggle for your rights and freedom. The high prestige which the firm has been able to maintain is not due to my solitary efforts but to the kind and continued co-operation I have received from my brothers and members of my family and the honest and selfless assistance of my co-workers."

In February 1924, the various communities of Aden held a large gathering at "*Merwan Baug*" in his honour of his Knighthood. The address given on this occasion referred to Sir Hormusjee's share in the development of Aden in the following terms:

> "The name of Aden has become unpopular. Many who have been through it on a flying visit and those who have not even seen it speak of the city in deprecating terms. Some call it the hottest place on earth, some know it as a hot bed of coal and some

humourously term it "the dry hills of Aden", yet with the passing of time so many improvements have been effected that we have a crop of visitors in the cold weather who find the place beneficial to their health. Many of these improvements, Sir, are due mainly to your foresight, influence, industry and perseverance. Your great qualities of sympathy and your perpetual and every ready desire to assist individuals and institutions who stand in need of such help, your eagerness to improve the lot of those around you all these are shining examples for others to imitate. Although you are with us for a few months every year yet our interests, our liberties, our welfare as a whole rest in your hands and are proud to have such a trustworthy guide as our leader, and we pride ourselves that our commercial relations have always been marked by cordiality, goodwill and peace."

In reply to this address Sir Hormusjee in a delightful and learned discourse gave a historic survey of the public and industrial life of the city and of the many notables who had worked for its betterment. He related how the Adenites had helped his father and himself in all their efforts for securing public rights and the staunch loyalty they had always shown. He praised all those men of other communities who had established business firms in Aden and remembered those who could recall with pride the contribution they had made to the life of the city. He recalled the time before the advent of the British when Aden had been devoid of such amenities as water, fresh vegetables, drainage, hygienic conditions of living, quick methods of communication and compared it with the present



The Sultan of Lahej.

when every "blessing of civilization" had been made available to the community. Comparing the two, Sir Hormusjee said:

> "During my long stay in Aden I have succeeded in winning over the trust of all communities and their leaders. The lives of those great pioneers were beset with overwhelming difficulties. The "Great Gate" had to be crossed on a donkey's back; the drinking water had to be fetched in leather bags from the "Khusaf Valley" on donkey's backs and one had to hold one's handkerchief to one's nose when drinking the water in order to avoid the smell of oil. Ice could only be obtained from the P. & O. Steamers as a great favour when it was needed in illness. Potatoes and onions were available only to the rich; the common people had to live chiefly on brinjal, pumpkins, cucumber, spinach or radishes. The journey between Bombay and London had to be made in sailing boats. During the monsoon it would be a common occurrence to have to turn back half-way on account of the stormy seas one encountered. Still it was a period of peace and contentment. Forty-five years ago when I just set foot in Aden it was like a flowering bud; and it was my privilege gradually to see it blossom and reach its present glorious condition. Once the home of 500 fishermen Aden today has a population of 50,000 and an annual turnover of a crore and a half. In addition Aden is now a first class port between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden thanks to the efficiency of British officials. The residents of Aden have always been helpful to the British Government and have refrained from political disturbances and discontent. This has contributed a great deal towards the present position of the seaport. By the introduction of hygienic conditions of living the mortality of Aden has greatly decreased and that this should cause some

of our Indian citizens to be envious is but natural. Aden can favourably compare with any other Indian city in its sanitation and health. Several plans have been considered for increasing its importance as a seaport and it is my earnest prayer that we may live to see Aden maintain its position as a premier coaling port as well as increase its trade relations with the world."

Sir Hormusjee's life and soul have been devoted to increasing the worth and popularity of this port. His hospitality is proverbial and known throughout the East. The social and intellectual aristocracy of the world on their way to and from Europe have experienced this hospitality which have been extended to all without distinction of caste or creed. Sir Hormusjee has a large and international circle of friends and is happy in the contacts he has made. Whenever members of the British Royal Family and the great officials of the British Government have passed through Aden it has been Sir Hormusjee's privilege to preside over dinners given in their honour, after him members of the Adenwalla family have been accorded this honour.*

* "Sir Hormusjee read an address before His Late Majesty, King George V, when as Duke of Cornwall and York, he was journeying through Aden to Australia in 1901 for the purpose of opening the Commonwealth Parliament and acted in a similar capacity when His Majesty opened the Coronation Durbar in Delhi in 1911. Sir Hormusjee also read an address to His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught when, on his return journey from Cape Town after opening the Union Parliament of South Africa, he landed at Aden for the purpose of unveiling a statue to the Memory of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria." A. N. Joshi.

In 1892 Sir Hormusjee was appointed a Trustee of the port of Aden and held this office for a number of years; during his absence the position has been held by his sons and brothers. In 1901 he was appointed President of the Aden Port Commission and in 1912 went to Boston as a representative of the Aden Chamber of Commerce where the Fifth International Commercial Congress was being held and impressed everyone with his business acumen, knowledge and skill. By visiting the various centres of commercial enterprise he acquired a great many new ideas on every hand.

In every sphere of the social, political and commercial life of Aden Sir Hormusjee has played an important part and has a reputation for honesty, straightforwardness and unusual business ability. He is looked upon as a *Guru* not only by the Parsees but by the other communities in Aden which entirely owes its prominence to his foresight, ability and generosity.

He has however for a number of years left the port and is leading a more or less retired life in Bombay, because of his advancing years, but Aden is a perpetual monument to his existence and his many good deeds still live in the hearts of countless inhabitants of this fortunate city. The Jerbai Cowasji Dinshaw Charitable Dispensary, Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw Anglo-Vernacular School and various other institutions benefit all sections of the community for which his name will be ever remembered by the people.

After his retirement to Bombay in 1920 Sir Hormusjee has undertaken a voyage to Iran and later to Europe but of recent years ventures to hill-stations nearly for the Summer. He takes an active interest in the Social welfare of his community and even at this advanced age works with great zeal and vigour. He has been one of the factors responsible for the higher social position of the Parsees and he has always tried to show them the way of peace and goodwill. He has tried whenever possible to make them love their motherland, maintain their ancient traditions and respect their religion. In this sphere he has done really beneficent work. He is intimately connected with various associations and makes an extremely just Chairman. He has a very well-balanced mind and sound judgment and although advanced in years is so mentally alert and so eager and happy to keep pace with the times that he acts as a very successful link between the younger and older generations of his community. He is one of the trustees of the *Parsee Panchayet* the highest honour to which anyone can attain in the affairs of the community. The *Panchayet* is a body which looks after the various charities of the community distributes money according to the need of individuals and aims at the economic betterment of the Parsees. It awards scholarships to deserving students, gives loans whenever necessary and in the deliberations of this useful and benevolent institution Sir Hormusjee's advice is of the greatest possible help. He is also Chairman of the Aden and Lonavla *Parsee Panchayets* and constitutes a tower of strength to these bodies.

Sir Hormusjee has always displayed great interest in the Zoroastrian religion and is President of the Bombay *Jashan* Committee which is a body devoted to encouraging and distributing literature connected with the religion and the history of the Parsees. This includes bigraphies of famous members of the community and under Sir Hormusjee's able guidance the Committee is doing extremely useful and laudable work.

The Iran League which was founded about fifteen years ago with the object of awakening and helping the Zoroastrians in India and the Irani Zoroastrians in Persia, and which has done very good work in this direction also has Sir Hormusjee as its august President. He is not only its leader and supporter but the League owes its entire existence to him and has achieved a great deal for Iran and the Irani Zoroastrians. He has not only brought the association to the notice of the Parsees in India but created in the community a love of its ideals, and the interest that the Parsees show in the land of their ancestors in its traditions, language, history and people is due entirely to his efforts. He himself has great love for the motherland and feels an affectionate kinship for his Iranian brethren.

Sir Hormusjee is also President of the Y.M.P.A. and is keenly interested in all its activities. It was under his Chairmanship that Dr. Moonje addressed members of the Association on "Indian Youth and Military Training." Sir Hormusjee also supported Dr. Moonje's arguments and spoke on the benefits

and usefulness of military training, touching on the average Indian Youth's indifference to a life of adventure in the army. He reminded his audience of the great Iranian Emperors and appealed to his hearers to follow their great example stressing with great eloquence the necessity for such training in India today.

Another body which claims Sir Hormusjee as President is the Dhobi Talao Parsi Association. This was first started in 1935 and its objects as Sir Hormusjee explained was not to compete with or obstruct the work of other bodies but to stem the tide of deterioration which seemed to be advancing on the community and which in fact called for more associations of a similar nature to help in the good task. The Association hoped to work in the cause of education, unemployment, health and would help all those who needed assistance.

Sir Hormusjee is the Chairman of the Directorate of the Union Bank of India, Trustee of the Parsee Panchayet, Trustee of the Bombay Humanitarian League, President of the Jashan Committee, President of the Iran League, President of the Y.M. P.A., President of the Dhobi Talao Parsee Association, Vice-President of the Western India National Liberal Association, Patron of various institutions, and is connected with several mercantile, commercial, industrial, charitable, educational, journalistic, political, semi-political and communal institutions and association. He is also keenly

Grandson and Grandfather



Master Cowasjee and Sir Hormusjee

interested in all concerns started with the object of elevating the community in every sphere. He is not only present at the business meetings of all the countless concerns with which he is connected and for which he achieves so much but may be found at every important social function: at the Persian Consulate or at Government House where his behaviour and attitude is marked with that simplicity, courtesy and graciousness which is the usual accompaniment of good breeding.

Sir Hormusjee performed the opening ceremony for the Jam-e-Jamshed Charity Blocks on which occasion a huge gathering of well-known *Parsee* men and women was present. In the course of a very eloquent speech he exhorted the *Parsees* to be true to their religious principles and that charitable-mindedness for which the community was so justly famous. He said:

> "I was really glad to see that the ceremony this evening started with a *jashan*, for it is the fashion among the younger generation to decide all religious formulae and practices; there is no reverence shown towards those ideas which were looked upon with respect by their forefathers. I earnestly hope and pray that the present generation will continue to respect these traditions and those religious practices. Before declaring these buildings open I take the opportunity to wish everyone of its future inhabitants a long and happy life, peace of mind, the will and capacity to do good deeds, to live in harmony with their surroundings and to meet with prosperity and success in all their enterprises."

Dastur Mr. Kaikhushroo Kutar thanking Sir Hormusji said:

> "I think I am voicing the feeling of the community when I say that Sir Hormusjee's services to our people have been really worthy of merit, it is not necessary for me to enlarge on this point for every individual in the community is aware of his services. The affection that he has for his people is too well-known to need repitition. Sir Hormusjee is at present 82 years old and we hope he will be spared long in our midst that we may celebrate his 100th birthday in a befitting manner and we pray that the Almighty might grant us this wish. He has dedicated his life to the service of the community and may God keep him in our midst so that he may be enabled to carry on the good work that he has undertaken all along since his retirement."

Sir Hormusjee is to-day leading a very peaceful life among his friends and relations,* he is worshipped as an idol by his children and grand-

* "A great captain of industry, a munificent patron of science and arts, a generous dispenser of large-hearted and catholic charities, Sir Hormusjee has for over eighty-two years been embarked on the voyage of life. In that time he has charted many seas and put in at many harbours. He has sailed placidly in calm seas and weathered high storms. Always he has shown adroit navigation afraid neither to tack nor to go straight on. He has won the reward of his perseverance, his skill, his generosity and magnanimity, his benevolence and benefactions and his enterprise in the richness of the cargoes that he has borne back, and the splendid variety of the voyages that he has made. Sir Hormusjee is riding still.....the high seas of great affairs, and his sails are set gallantly to the wind..... Success has come in his way in full measure, it has come throughout inevitably, for his talents are superbly fashioned for its attainment." A. N. Joshi.

children and family. He makes it a point to leave his bed at sunrise and after his morning prayers and breakfast settles down to work till half-past eleven. During that time he interviews various people on business matters, bank managers, educationists and crowds of poor widows, destitute individuals and the like each of whom he treats with unfailing courtesy and consideration. At all these interviews his cheque book is his faithful companion and he never refuses an appeal or lets any one go away from him unsatisfied. His charity is unostentatious.* From the depths of a truly noble and generous heart he gives and gives and gives to causes and individuals, to associations, social service institutions to everything and anyone who goes to him for help. His generosity is limitless. The poor for miles around have heard of it and flock in their hundreds to him and not a soul of them is allowed to leave with an empty hand. In this land of saints and holy men he still earns distinction by his deeds. Having himself borne the burden of life with great heroism, patience courage and endurance he helps others to weather the storm and stands by them through thick and thin. Service to the cause of humanity has always been his motto and he has unfailingly done his best for human kind.

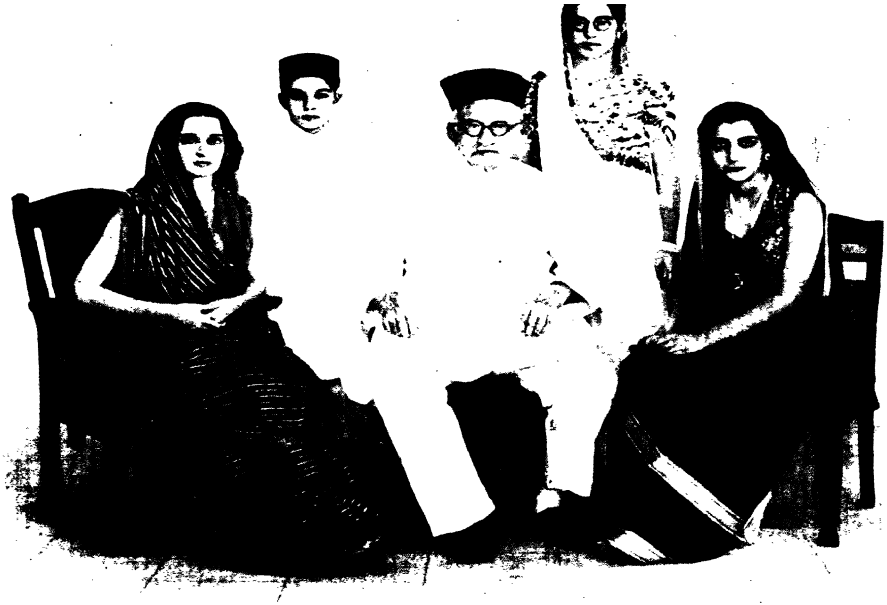
* "Sir Hormusjee is more generous in his private than in his public benefactions and he supports hundreds of poor Parsee families month after month from his private purse. Sir Hormusjee is the last of the great patriarchs of the Parsees, and with all the influence and all the wealth still possessed by the Parsee community, there is none like Sir Hormusjee to whom they can appeal in times of difficulty, none who will strive so readily and ardently to promote their happiness and welfare." A. N. Joshi.

The mode of life adopted at Adenwalla Baug by its inmates, their simplicity, their purity of thought are tributes of the high morale of the head of the family. Even in his correspondence Sir Hormusjee displays a gift of clear-sightedness of weighing the pros and cons of each issue before pronouncing a judgment.

After finishing his morning's work Sir Hormusjee has his meal followed by a little rest during which he settles down to a comfortable little chat with his family and friends. He takes a keen interest in all affairs which affect his children and grand-children and does all in his power to give them a type of education and training befitting their position, above all he sees that they are brought up in such a way that they can successfully face life's problems.

At four he is again ready to start work which usually takes the shape of some activity for the benefit of humankind. His help is usually sought in such affairs—whether educational, social, industrial or political. In all these things he takes a keen interest, does his duty uncomplainingly and contributes his quota of solid and useful work to each. Sir Hormusjee does not usually go to cinemas or theatres because he believes that they create a mental attitude not altogether happy. He believes in regular hours and himself goes to bed at ten.

In all sections and classes of the *Parsee* community the Adenwalla family is respected and



Miss Manekbai F. H. C. Dinshaw, Master Cowasjee N. H. C. Dinshaw, Sir Hormusjee,
Miss Makki N. H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Alanmai F. H. C. Dinshaw.

revered for the glorious achievements of their members. Among these Sir Hormusjee's name stands supreme. He is loved on account of his many lovable qualities, his kindness, his sympathy, his generosity, devotion to religion, the affection and esteem with which he is surrounded has hardly been equalled by any other leader of the community whether in the political, social or educational field. All of these have had rivals and none have secured the affection of the public to the same extent as Sir Hormusjee has done.

In the course of a conversation with me he said: "I have not a single enemy among my own people. Every *Parsee* is my friend. It is only among the Hindus, Europeans and Mahommedans that I have particular friends."

It is not to be wondered at therefore that the descendants of Noshirwan and Jamshed should be proud of their great compatriot and should view with pleasure and gratification all his numerous successes.

CHAPTER VI

Sir Hormusjee and Iran

DURING the last 20 years there has been noticeable among the *Parsees* a great emotional longing for their motherland. The descendants of those ancient Persians who left their native shores on account of their religion have not only developed a love for Iran but have even contemplated the advisability of migrating to that country. About this phase Mr. E. G. Browne observes:

> "Almost anything which serves to strengthen the bonds between the Zoroastrians and their ancient home is worthy of all commendation and support. I think you will find amongst the younger generation of Persians in Persia a very much more friendly feeling, indeed a warm admiration for the church of Zoroaster."

It is but natural that *Parsees* should feel this love for their ancient land. The history of their motherland, its glorious past, its traditions, its culture have very often been to them a source of inspiration. They feel that these ancient traditions are an invaluable heritage and now that the necessity for a historical background is being increasingly recognised they cling all the more to their glorious past.

Its climate has to a great extent influenced Persian history. As Edmund Warner says:

> "Iran is a land of sharp contrasts: of intense heat and cold, of sudden and abnormal changes of temperature, of dead level and steep ascent, of splendid fertility, hard by lifeless desolation, of irrigation and dust. Its natural characteristics find expression in the ancient cosmogony of its people .....Iran itself is, of course a land of brilliant sunshine and startling contrast of light and shade; and this has evidently had a great effect on the minds of its people. The Persians have a love for bright colours, rich fabrics, sweet smelling flowers and glittering jewels. Their imagination is wonderfully vivid and flowing."

Not only is Iran the motherland of Zoroaster* but of several other great Zoroastrians. The most

* "Zarthustra's was the earliest voice to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was near at hand and also loudest, the most national, and yet withal free from provincialism .....In fact no man lived so god-like, and yet so practical, no man more sublimely religious and yet free from bigotry, none more patriotically national, yet international and pan-human in outlook and none who knew the imperfections of man better, and yet withal attempted with a greater degree of success than has fallen to the lot of any leader, preacher, saint or *savant* to purify and sublimate the ordinary bundle of his sins and backslidings, namely humanity, to a higher level of right conduct, right word and right thought.....Zarthustra was the greatest prophet not only of Iran, but of the whole world. Being also historically the earliest prophet-voice, many a later founder of religions and sects borrowed knowingly or unknowingly from him."

eminent of Persian poets Firdausi † claims Iran as his motherland. No wonder then that the exiled descendants of this great people should have feelings of affection and reverence for their country. Iran was once the home of art, culture and philosophy and it has made a great and lasting contribution to world civilisation. Whether in matters religious, spiritual or philosophical Iran had always something new to contribute to life. It had even in ancient times evolved a perfect system of government on which governments in many European countries are based today. Roman and Greek civilisation owed much to Persian ideals. The Iranians were also the first to realise that self-government and political freedom were good for the soul of a people. Their knowledge of medicine astrology and astronomy was wide and profound as was their art and philo-

† "But the king of epic poets is the great Firdausi of Tus. The *Shah-Nameh* has for thousand years been considered the one national poem of the country—a work that has made the deepest impression not only upon the literature of his country, but on the character of his readers as well. Its vast volume may tire out the patience of a foreign reader, but to a Persian it is his Book of Books, and its popularity is as fresh and alive to-day as when it was written a thousand years before. Nay, a thousand years before, he died a disappointed man for want of appreciation from his patron and his people, whilst to-day not only every cultured Persian Home has, amongst his prized possessions, a volume of the *Shah-Nameh*, but the whole nation repeatedly looks up to him whenever it is necessary to revive the dyeing embers of patriotism. And now the present great ruler of a once great nation, is erecting a great monument over the grave of this great poet, not only to do justice for all times to Firdausi but to remove the slur that was placed on the name of royalty by the short-sightedness and parsimony of Sultan Mahmud."

sophy which provided a basis for several Western philosophical systems of today. When Persia fell into the hands of the Arabs the conquerors adopted all the ideals of the conquered race. They not only ruled according to the Iranian conception of Government but as they had conquered the whole of Spain and a large part of Southern Europe they founded the famous Moorish universities in Granada, Cordova, Andalusia where Iranian language and literature were taught and Europe thus acquired the benefits of the ideals of an ancient civilisation. Even Indian architecture shows signs of Persian influence. Roman law was based on Iranian jurisprudence and in almost every department particularly of artistic and intellectual activity Iran led the way and the rest of the world followed. In particular were the Christian, Jewish and Mahommedan faiths influenced by Zoroastrianism. The great Greek philosophers, Pythogoras, Aristotle, Plato, Diogenes, Socrates learnt what they knew at the feet of ancient Iranian masters, whose contribution as well as that of their great and glorious land is unique in the history of world civilization. For philosophy and the study of spiritual sciences Iranians had acquired a fame which had spread from Baghdad and Damascus to Cairo. Persian poetry with its wealth of imagery, its sweetness, its incomparable charm has achieved an eminence which neither Arabian, Indian nor Turkish poetry has ever achieved. In it lie embedded that beauty, charm romance and graciousness of living which have always been so prominently associated with the Persian tradition.

These found expression in every incident of their life and art from the beautiful carpets of ancient Persia to the exquisite miniatures whose delicacy mirrored that ethereal lightness, deftness and sureness of touch which only great art can achieve. The Persian language the language of kings, courtiers and romantic love still has the same delicacy, sweetness and elegance which add so much to the grace of life. As Edmond Warner the well-known authority on Persia observes:

> "The Iranians were the earliest specimens of any Aryan race to think out and achieve political unity .....They evolved a peculiar national culture of their own and were the precursors of the modern European ideas of Nationality and National solidarity, to which they attained under their great kings like Cyrus and Darius, long before such things could be worked out by the Europeans or even imagined by the Hellenes, whose narrow visions were always bound and walled in by the political ideas centering round their own petty city states.....Even in the case of such a politically minded folk like the Athenians, it requires a Persian invasion for them to see beyond their nose, and if possible, try to work out a scheme of pan-Hellenese Federation, to last as long as the violence of the Persian cyclone threatened the shores of Greece.....Hence the ancient Iranians are the earliest Political *Gurus* of the Aryan race, and, as measured by the Eastern standards, their Empire was a sample of perfection, and even politically was one of the great Empires which the world had known. They were the youngest race to separate from the common Indo-European Aryan stock and were for a time closely allied with the Indian Aryans, who had trekked from the Steppes of Central Asia and settled in the valley of the Five Rivers.

> Sharing the same cultural inheritance of the Aryan, they remained for the longest time in close contact with their brothers.....and the literature of both the races preserves not only records of many an Indo-Iranian marriage, but also common traits which they inherited from their ancestral home."

Thus we see that Iran has contributed a great deal to world civilisation and it is only natural that *Parsees* even at this distance of time should feel attracted to their ancient motherland and be proud of her achievements. The beginning of this century has witnessed a complete change in the Muslim attitude to Zoroastrianism and to the little band of Zoroastrians who have so gallantly adhered to their faith. Not only does the government tend towards Iranian ideals but the tendency is noticeable in the entire population. Prior to this the state of affairs in Persia reflected a totally different attitude. Says S. M. Edwards:

> "During the first half of the nineteenth century the Zoroastrians of Persia,.....were subjected to very great hardships by the Persian Government. Justice was denied to them in the courts of the country, and they were compelled to submit to a *Jizya* or poll-tax, which the majority of them were wholly unable to pay.....Besides the hateful *Jizya* the following grievances formed the burden of their complaints: Persian Zoroastrians were liable to forcible conversion by the Muhammadans; property belonging to a Zoroastrian family was confiscated wholesale for the use and benefit of individual proselytes and their descendants, notwithstanding the prior claims of lawful newly-acquired property was liable to be heavily taxed for the benefit of the

> Mullas; it was forbidden to erect new homes or repair old ones; Zoroastrians were forbidden to ride on horseback or to wear new or white clothes; and those who engaged in trade were subjected to the most extortionate demands under the pretence of the recovery of government custom dues."

Happily all this has changed and we find the Muslim population to-day taking a very enlightened interest in all things relating to ancient Persian culture and traditions.

From the year 1925 A.D. when Reza Shah Pehlavi came to the throne and started the *Pehlavi* dynasty, every aspect seems to point to its being an era of well-being and prosperity for the country. The great and glorious achievements of Italy during the Augustan age, of India during the Gupta period bid fair to be rivalled by Iran under the regime of this great emperor. In the fourteen years during which Reza Shah has been at the helm of affairs he has effected great and permanent changes in Iran. A nation whose spirit had been crushed, which seemed to live on without a proper sense of self-respect has been changed into a nation of independent and self-respecting individuals capable of shouldering great responsibilities and of standing shoulder to shoulder with the great nations of the West. This achievement within the short period during which Reza Shah has been at the helm of affairs is truly remarkable and is being watched with wide-spread interest by the rest of the world. It has disproved the pessimistic forecasts of Euro-



Sir Hormusji, Bai Manekbai and Behen Alanmai
in America.

pean politicians for Reza Shah's regime has been accounted one of the greatest political achievements in modern history. The foundation for all these activities was laid in 1896 when several innovations were made for the benefit of the country. Day by day these changes not only increased in number but also in their efficacy and met with enthusiastic co-operation from the public. When in 1921 Colonel Reza Khan captured Teheran after having completely routed the Russian army near Kazvin the Iranians realised that a great deliverer had arisen in their midst who would achieve for their beloved country that freedom which is the birthright of every great nation. Realising that Reza Shah had all the qualities of a great leader—tact, intelligence of a high order, a knack of grasping every opportunity that came in his way, a keen sense of political manoeuvring they appointed him the commander of their army, then Prime Minister, later Regent and on 16th December the Imperial ruler of their country. The great Emperor changed Iran from a completely dependent country to a gloriously independent one, inculcated in the people a fine spirit of tolerance in religion and brought prosperity, contentment and wealth to the nation. It may safely be predicted that in the comity of Asiatic nations Persia will achieve an eminence second only to that which Japan has attained. There is moreover that political stability in Iran to-day which is so necessary for her peaceful and continuous development. Art and industry, trade and commerce have been encouraged and are definitely on the increase. Travel-

ling which used to be so difficult in olden days has been made safe and easy and all the amenities of civilised existence made available to the public. The late Mr. D. J. Irani, an eminent Persian *Savant* writing about modern Iran observes:

> ".....The achievement of Persia in the last seven years, and how the country has freed itself, to use the words of Mr. Levi, from the shackles of Mediaevalism in which it was fettered. In the place of mule-tracks and antiquated caravan-roads nearly seven thousand miles of motor roads have been built. In the case of slow-going camel transport, fast motors join the various cities of Persia, as is done anywhere in Europe. A trans-Persian Railway is almost half-constructed and in five years more, we shall travel from the port to Teheran in a first class train, thereby transforming the means of communication in Persia at one stroke and making them completely modern. With a nucleus of four thousand which Reza Shah commanded in 1921, Persia has now a well-trained and well-equipped army of nearly one hundred thousand including reserves, promptly available. Under the law of Conscription the ancient military ardour of the nation is revived and the fine trained Officers of the Persian Army can compare most favourably with any Officers in any European Country.
>
> "As a result the authority of the Central Government is well established over the whole country. The insurgent Chiefs of turbulent tribes have all been subdued, and as a necessary consequence, perfect safety prevails in the land, and travelling has become as secure as in any place in Europe. The administration of Law and justice too has been so thoroughly reformed that every nation has agreed

to surrender its rights of capitulations. Persia, a land of culture both of the Zoroastrian and the Islamic times, had in or about 1920 only about six hundred schools with thirty thousand students. To-day the number of the schools of all levels number so many thousands and students hundreds of thousands all studying from a modern and uptodate curriculum with mathematics, physics, chemistry, hygiene and physical culture, all taking their due share in the education of Persia's youth. For the last several years, over one hundred boys, the cream of these modern schools, are sent every year to various Universities in Europe for specialised studies. Every town has a municipality, and road-building and town-planning have become the themes of the day. Post and Telegraph offices are made up-to-date, and a fine telephone system connects every town and village of the whole Persia with the centre. Persia has indeed burst its shackles of mediaevalism and that too by her own unaided efforts, under the guidance and leadership of its great King, Reza Shah Pahlavi."

Every measure undertaken by this great Iranian leader contributes in some way to the happiness and progress of the country. He has revived the ancient Iranian spirit of tolerance and Zoroastrians as well as Muslims are living amicably side by side co-operating with one another in their tasks. The *Bahai* cult which has spread like wildfire in Iran has minimised the Muslim bigotry of olden days and considerably helped its disciples to view the devotees of other creeds with tolerance and respect. This respect has been extended to Zoroaster and all around one sees a spirit of co-operation which augurs well for harmonious relations between the

two sects. The spirit which has animated Reza Shah Pehlavi reflects the driving force which mark Mussolini's achievements in Italy, Hitler's in Germany, Kemal Attaturk's in Turkey and those of Lenin and Stalin in Russia. He has worked steadily and unfalteringly for the progress and welfare of Iran and justified the wonderful faith which his people have reposed in him.

In Iran as elsewhere the clergy and religious leaders have symbolised the retrogressive elements and worked against the plans formulated by Reza Shah, but with great astuteness the present Ruler destroyed the very basis of their power and education and Westernisation did the rest. Prof. A. M. Moulvi in his recent book "Modern Iran" relates how Reza Shah accomplished this. He says:

> "In 1928 uniform dress for men was made compulsory. All Iranians were required by law to put on European costume. The *Mullas* were exempted but to prove their *Mullaism* they had to appear before an official Board for examination and procure a certificate or a licence to wear the cloak and turban, the traditional marks of a Muslim divine. This was a severe blow to the *Mullas*. But there was no way out of it. Times had changed. The country was determined to go ahead. The *Mullas* had no other alternative than to adapt themselves to the changed conditions and move with the times."

The schools in modern Iran are progressive, up-to-date and efficient. Statistics show that three thousand Iranian students are at present taking their training in the various universities of Europe and

America, and every year a further batch of a hundred is sent out by the government to study in European institutions. Women enjoy complete equality of status with men. *Purdah* which in Iran as in other Muslim countries was an age-old institution was abolished almost overnight and in achieving this Reza Shah displayed the most acute understanding of feminine psychology which any ruler has ever displayed. He caused a proclamation to be issued to the effect that only immoral women could go about veiled with the result that the most orthodox and conservative of women were compelled to show their faces in public or run the risk of being molested and having improper advances made to them.

Consequently with the entry of women into social life customs have changed, conventions gone by the board and all the old harmful, complex-ridden relationships between the sexes have disappeared. All round modern Iran one sees a nation alive to its responsibilities, conscious of its great and ancient heritage and prepared to sacrifice all in order that the greatness which once belonged to Persia of old may be revived.

As far as commerce and industry are concerned Reza Shah has left no stone unturned for their adequate development. His work has been made difficult because of the mountainous nature of the country which for want of adequate transport facilities makes communication difficult. Today Iran can boast of 9,000 miles of good roads which are

continually being added to as trade increases. The Trans-Persian Railway has made travelling easier, safer and cheaper throughout the country besides helping farmers to send their produce throughout the country. Even the financial condition of Iran is very sound. She has no national debt and owing to the introduction of the gold standard holds a very good position in the world of international finance. The system is so devised that the money does not go out of the country and is mainly utilised towards the development of national industries and commercial improvement.

The police force and the army are equally admirable and along with the postal, telegraph and telephone services can hold their own with any run on the most modern and efficient lines. Neither is Iran backward in civic matters. Every big city has its own municipality which functions efficiently, is progressive in every way and ensures the hygienic needs of the population, special laws and privileges are accorded to farmers and the country boasts a very happy and contented peasantry and labour class.

The Emperor has taken great care to preserve ancient monuments. The beautiful palaces, carving forts and caves, the inscriptions on the mountains: all the relics of the great *Sassanian* period have been carefully preserved. The greatness of ancient Iran which these monuments reflect serve as an inspiration to the Iranians of today, and under the inspired guidance of Reza Shah Pehlavi Iran bids fair to be

once more the home of art and culture and to regain the ancient glories that she has lost.

From an economic and financial standpoint, the situation of Persia is most encouraging. Constitution is firmly established. The Parliament is pre-eminently interested in the economic development and social welfare of the country, and has already approved a body of sound and beneficial legislation. The Government shows convincing evidences of stability. National unity is increasing. Order and security exist throughout the country. Revenues are increasing, the public debt is decreasing. In the absence of international complications, which seem improbable, it can be confidently anticipated that there will be no halt in the remarkable progress under way in Persia.

Even in this sphere we find that Iran has nothing to fear. She has vast financial resources in the shape of oil fields, mines and her soil is good. European and American commercial interests display a rivalry in this sphere in which Asiatic nations participate, her proximity to Europe rendering trade relations easy. If the *Parsees* tried to revive their ancient connection with the country it would work out to their mutual benefit.

The *Parsees* of today it must be admitted have adopted a very high and luxurious standard of living which is rendered possible by the wealth left to them by their fore-fathers who with their amazing capacity for business were enabled to

amass huge fortunes. Unfortunately that spirit of adventure, the ability to strike out for one's self into new avenues is not being displayed by their descendants. There is too competition from Hindus and Mahommedans both of which communities are pushing forward at a rapid pace. If the *Parsees* established trade relations with Iran there is every likelihood of their acquiring wealth in that quarter. They have been invited by Reza Shah himself to co-operate in the great work of reviving their ancient land. In one of his speeches the Shah said:

> "You Parsees are as much the children of this soil as any other Iranis, and so you are as much entitled to have your proper share in its development as any other nationals. We estimate our Empire's resources to be even greater than those of America, and in tapping them you can take your proper part. We do not want you to come all bag and baggage, just wait a little and watch. If you find proposition beneficial both to yourselves and to this land, then do come and we shall greet you with open arms, as we might our dear brothers and sisters.
>
> "Iran is still a virgin country, having all the resources of her development intact within her..... The Parsees, who are the sons of this holy soil, and who possess means and power to work these schemes, should see their way to return to this land and be engaged in the service of their ancient mother-land and thereby benefit themselves.....
>
> "Iran is vast country pregnant with many advantages and fresh fields waiting for development. We suggest that the Parsees who are still the sons



Seth Framroz, Sir Hormusjee, Seth Dinshawji, Bai Manekbai and Behen Alanmai
Standing in front of Sir Hormusjee: Seth Nusserwanji Hormusjee.

> of Iran though separated from her, should look upon this country of to-day as their own, and differentiate it from its immediate past, and strive to derive benefit from her development, especially when they are sure to work their way through....."

Nothing could be wiser for the *Parsees* than to accept this cordial invitation in which the Emperor asks them to co-operate in the regeneration of his lands. There are unlimited, untapped resources in Iran today, possibilities for commercial enterprise and that these privileges should be accorded to the *Parsees* is but natural for they really belong to the land. They happen also to be particularly well-fitted for such a task. They have commercial acumen and tact and if they take this opportunity one feels sure they could render great services not only to their motherland but improve the condition of the people of Iran.

The *Parsees* are naturally drawn to Persia. Their attraction to the country is not only religious but sentimental and patriotic. They have great admiration for the Iranian traditions, Iranian culture and its past history: they view with pride the glory attached to its various imperial achievements in the past and they look upon the country with feelings of affection and respect. In spite of leaving Iranian shores almost 1300 years ago they still retain for Iran patriotic feelings which may, under the circumstances be considered unique. The two great factors which keep up this spirit of patriotism are the holy fire which they brought from Persia at the

risk of great personal suffering and the works of Firdausi Tusi * the great Iranian poet whose beautiful *Shahnameh* describes the grandeur and glory that was Iran. The modern *Parsee* is proud of his ancient heritage. He believes that there is a similarity of ideals and attitudes between the Iranian and himself, and it is natural that he should be drawn towards the country. Should political conditions in India make it necessary for the *Parsees* to leave these shores Iran will always be ready to welcome these descendants of her brave and courageous sons who sacrificed their all for their faith and though a mere handful made a name for themselves in a foreign country. The Iran today has no religious intolerance and the *Parsees* can live side by side with the Persians without being compelled to give up their religion and can contribute to the

* "Firdausi is usually called the Homer of the East. The *Shah-Nameh* abounds in adventures of the most wild and romantic descriptions, in prodigious efforts of strength and valour; and there are heroines to be met with in the Persian bard, as intrepid and beautiful as ever vanquished heart or wielded sword in the Western poetry. It is, in fact, considered one of the finest productions of the kind which Oriental.....nations can boast; and though the general character of Persian compositions is well known to be excess of ornament and inflation of style, the language of Firdausi is comparatively simple.....His verse is exquisitely smooth and flowing and never interrupted by harsh forms of construction. He is perhaps the sweetest as well as the most sublime poet of Persia. In epic grandeur, he is above all, and he is, besides one of the easiest to be understood..... The popularity of the *Shah-Nameh* among Parsees, is among other reasons, due to the fact, that in the *Shah-Nameh*, they find, as it were, a running commentary or explanation of some of the historical allusions in the *Avesta,* especially in the *Yashts*." Atkinson.

well-being and prosperity of the country. Reza Shah's rule is as safe in Persia as British Rule is in India to-day. There is no doubt about the safety of the *Parsees* in Iran so long as the present lines laid down by the Shah are maintained by his successors. The Islam of to-day in Iran is non-combative and I am a confirmed optimist.

In order to consolidate the relations between the *Parsees* and Iranians an Iran League * was established in 1922 of which Sir Hormusjee had the honour to be the first President and Patron, and he still takes a very active part in all matters relating to it. His generous support to the financial side of the League and his own active co-operation in making it go are mainly responsible for its continued existence. Thanks to his leadership, his literary talent, his individuality, and influence he has brought the League to its present position and popularised it not only among *Parsees* in India but also in Great Britain where the *Parsee* Union has testified its willingness to participate in its activities. However busy he may be Sir Hormusjee always finds time for the work of the League. Meetings are held in his beautiful and spacious bungalow and members find his wise and sage counsel in-

* "The Iran League has indeed rendered a conspicuous service to mankind in general and Persians in particular, by getting the text of the Sacred Gathas, the hymns of the Prophet, translated into the Persian language, and putting the same in the hands of the cultured Persians, who can appreciate the teachings of Zoroaster and thus help in regenerating Persia and its people on the lines indicated in the sacred hymns." A. N. Joshi.

variably helpful. The scope of the League is wide and it has been founded with the following aims:

1. That *Parsees* should continue to maintain their connection with Iran.
2. That they should continue to regard Iran with patriotic fervour as in the past.
3. To better the condition of *Parsees* resident in Iran.
4. To take steps to encourage the study of the Zoroastrian religion and the history of ancient Iran.
5. To encourage *Parsees* to establish commercial relations with Iran.
6. To encourage tours to Iran in order to get first-hand knowledge of the country.
7. To spread knowledge about Iran by organising lectures, publishing books and broadcasting various facts about the country.
8. To encourage goodwill between *Parsees* and Iranians.

From 1925 onwards the League has rendered conspicuous service to mankind in general and Persia in particular. By encouraging translations of books they have brought to light several interesting facts about the Zoroastrian religion helped the Muslim population to understand its implications, the *Parsees* to get acquainted with their ancient heritage and the conditions existing in Iran today and they have helped to encourage cordial social

relationships between the two communities. Wires and letters of congratulations are exchanged on every festive occasion and all this has helped to wear away any feelings of ill-will which may have been generated centuries ago. If things continue in this friendly strain and ties are strengthened between the two peoples a greater number of *Parsees* could go to Persia, exchange views, explain their religious ideals and achieve in their own country what they have achieved for India. They have come to the forefront in Hindustan and can do the same elsewhere.

There is a section of the *Parsees* who regard the Iran League with scorn. They consider its ideals as silly sentiment, laugh at the notion of Persia being their Motherland. They say that that privilege can only be accorded to India as Iran had driven them out and India had accepted them with open arms, allowing them to pursue their religion unmolested and had helped them to achieve the position they enjoyed today. They also state that the position of *Parsees* in Iran today is not a particularly happy one and that they have lost all sense of self-respect, of independence and depend for support on Parsees of India. They also argue that the "Back to Iran" movement is a leap in the dark as although during Reza Shah Pehlavi's reign nothing can happen to them due to his extremely progressive outlook the question of the future still remained a vexed one. These scoffers however are misjudging the implications of the Iran League if

they consider that it aims at the wholesale repatriation of the *Parsees* from India. After having lived for over 1300 years in this country they have learned to love it and just at the moment when she is facing the most critical period in her history these followers of Zoroaster wish to contribute their quota to her development. The *Parsees* have been and are loyal to the British *raj* but at the same time wish to do their duty by their country. However, if they decide to adopt Iran as their Motherland it will not be to their disadvantage in any way.

A more acute problem which the community is facing today is that of unemployment, which is on the increase due to the progress that other communities are making in every sphere of life and activity. These unemployed men are living on doles from day to day—highly gifted young men with superlative qualifications have the greatest difficulty in finding work. If these young men turned their minds to Iran with the determination to make good they would find it extremely profitable in every way. In that country new mills are being established, new hospitals, schools and colleges built, new railways opened up and under these circumstances Iran affords a wide field of industry and commercial gain for those desiring to take the plunge.

If the *Parsees* determine to go to Iran there are several associations who are ready to give help, including the body managing the *Persian Zoroas-*

trian Amelioration Fund, the *Parsi Panchayet* and the *Iran League* itself. The moneyed class among the *Parsees* cannot leave India just now because of their vested interests in the country but if the Iranian Government and Iranian Muslims entertain the same goodwill towards them which they hold today there is likely to be a reciprocity of such sentiments and closer connection with Iran would also solve some of the unemployment problems of the *Parsees*. It would not be necessary for the *Parsees* to sever their connection with India but in the interest at least of a section of the *Parsees* it would be advisable to establish relations with Iran which like Japan is rapidly coming to the forefront in commercial affairs. With the zeal that their ancestors displayed in striking out for themselves adventuring to foreign lands, facing terrible hardships the modern *Parsee* could achieve wonders in Iran. That country is different now to what it used to be safer, more prosperous, better organised and all its departments efficiently conducted. The railways, banks, agriculture and other pursuits could absorb large numbers of them. The Swiss, Americans, Germans and others have been quick to seize these opportunities and have benefitted by them.

In the 19th century *Parsees* were accorded the same treatment in Persia as the Jews have endured under the Nazi regime of recent years. Hearing of this their *Parsee* co-religionists established the Persian Zoroastrian Amelioration Fund and sent a representation to Iran to make personal inquiries

in every case. They were able with the generous co-operation of *Parsee* members to raise a considerable amount and to effect improvements in the condition of their fellow Zoroastrians in Iran. Sir Dinshaw Manekji Petit played a very important part in these activities in those days, but later Sir Hormusjee was given the helm of affairs and under his wise guidance the association has more than justified its existence and proved its worth. Several fire-temples have been built, statistics show an increase in the birth rate and there is peace, prosperity and contentment all around.

Sir Hormusjee's historic voyage to Persia is worthy of one's admiration and respect. His association with the Iran League has proved most beneficial. Inspired by his great love for his mother land he has achieved wonders by his efforts, and at the advanced age of 70 visited the land of his ancestors enduring all the hardships which travel to that distant spot entailed. His party consisted of Mr. Dinshaw Cowasji Khandalawalla, Mr. Rustomji Nariman and Dr. Minocher Dady and left with the blessings of all the social and financial high lights of the community.

The first seaport touched by them was Karachi where a great welcome had been prepared for the party especially for Sir Hormusjee. He was taken round public institutions charitable and otherwise and was able to gauge the financial and social condition of his co-religionists. He was extremely

pleased with both and showed his satisfaction at the results achieved by these institutions which were doing really good solid work for the community, made possible by the benevolence of its richer and more influential sections. He even asserted that things were put on such a good foundation that the future was at least assured for fifty years. Khan Bahadur Mehta one of the most prominent citizens of Karachi entertained Sir Hormusjee dressed in the old-fashioned *mulmul dugli* and *pagdi* so much in vogue with the *sethiyas* of those days. The guest of honour proposed the toast of the *Parsee* residents of Karachi at a social function held in his honour which Dr. Dhalla acknowledged in the following terms:

> "Sir Hormusjee is one of the rarest jewels of our race. His simplicity is remarkable. Not only does he possess nobility but he has the distinction of being well-born. He helps his co-religionists in Bombay without any distinction of class and he practises all those principles of charity and goodness which is the heritage of our aristocracy. We hope that Almighty God will spare him for many years so that he might continue further the good work he has undertaken."

Of all stages of his journey through Persia Sir Hormusjee was accorded a warm and hearty welcome. The officials in all the districts were instructed by the minister-in-charge and the Emperor Reza Shah himself to afford every facility to this distinguished visitor from India so famous every where for his goodness and unselfishness. Sir Hormusjee

visited all the famous cities of Persia: Bushire, Kazrun, Shiraz, Yezd, Kerman, Ispahan, Teheran, Kuzvin, Rehst, Pahlevi Bunder; he even paid his respects to the old historical monuments, the beautiful palaces of the *Kadim* period in Iranian history, the glorious city of *Persepolis* which conjures up pictures of ancient grandeur, the beautiful palace known as *Takht-e-Jamshyd* where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep, *Nakshe Rustum* and *Pasargodi.* He went on a pilgrimage to the birthplace of his great prophet and visited the famous ruins of *Ragh* and *Raye.* Living among the *Parsees* in Iran he was able to gain first-hand and very useful information about their social and economic ideals and his visit to Persia enabled him to form friendships with local Muslim officials which he has maintained to this day. Coming into personal contact with the Emperor he was enabled moreover to bring a message of goodwill and cheer from him to *Parsees* in India. Sir Hormusjee was naturally deeply touched when he set foot on the shores of Iran—the country which his ancestors had quitted for a noble ideal. All its past glory flashed before him, all its greatness and its contribution to the culture and civilisation of the world. He had interviews with all the exalted officials of the State and with representative merchant princes with whom he discussed the trade relationships which could be brought about between the two countries. At Kazmi he was also accorded a warm reception and again interviewing prominent businessmen and

State officials he proceeded to the monuments and caves erected by Shapoor whose giant statue, 200 ft. in height lay in a most dilapidated condition at the entrance of the Caves. Sir Hormusjee offered some very valuable suggestions about its repair to the authorities. He next visited *Nackshe Shapoor* and showed great interest in the carving; he saw the Shapoor river which flows through the caves bearing the Emperor's name in the heart of which the victory of Shapoor over the Roman Emperor Valerian is carved. These stone pillars commemorate his triumph over the Romans for they still live for us today and will do so for our children. Through all the centuries they will say "Behold the power of Shapoor, behold the humblings of the pomp of Rome." Mr. E. C. Williams writing about the Emperor says:

> "Scattered up and down the country he has left memorials that have long withstood and will long withstand the ravages of Time. He founded cities ruined now but in their decay almost more majestic than they could have been in their prime. Persia had already developed a distinct civilization and an extraordinary genius for political organisation before the star of Rome had begun to cast its rays above the horizon of history. The immortal colonnades of *Persepolis* were reared before those of the *Parthenon*, and are still the greatest rival of the architectural triumphs of Greek civilization."

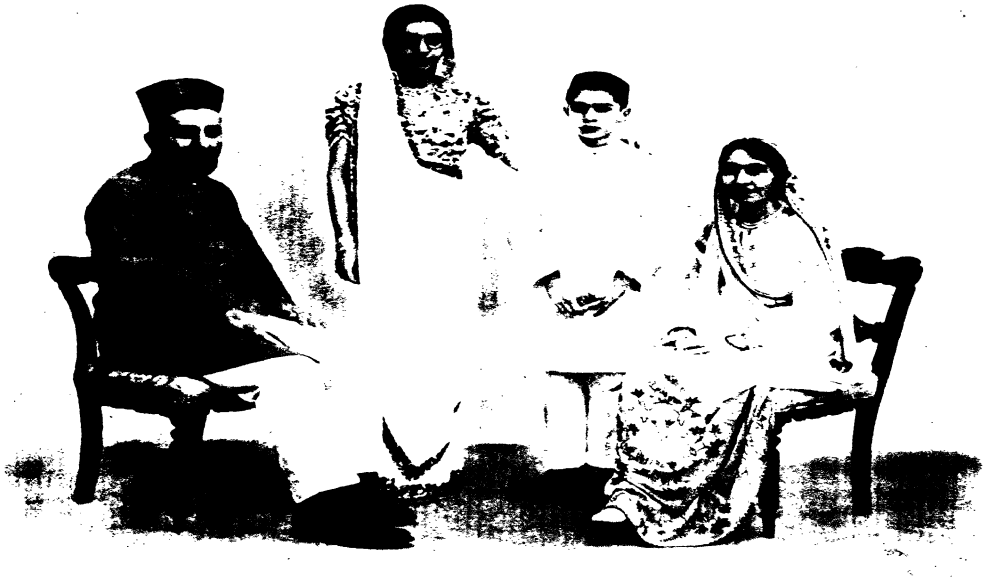
After visiting the caves he returned to Kazrun and from thence resumed his journey; on his way he saw the beautiful *Pule Arab* carvings on the

mountains. While travelling through Iran one has to pass four long chains of mountains named according to their various characteristics. Two of these present a formidable appearance owing to their very rugged and rough exteriors. The roads here are narrow and steep but from Dost Urzan to Shiraz they present no difficulty at all. Shiraz has been sung by Persian poets who speak about its *bulbuls* and roses and wine and the beauty of its women. One can still see luxuriant gardens and vineyards for *Shirazi* soil is very fertile and one can hark back to the songs of the old Persian poets who were inspired by its beauty. Here Sir Hormusjee as the guest of Haji Nemazee received a royal welcome and met all the prominent dignitaries of this beautiful city, besides representatives of the local *Jarthosti Anjuman* whose hospitality he also enjoyed.

On the way to *Persepolis* Sir Hormusjee saw the remarkable waterways built by the Shah at Bunde Amir; his arrival at this historic city was like that of a pilgrim who has journeyed to a holy land. *Persepolis* about which two great writers say:

> "It is this gigantic object which seem the proper guardians of the *Marvdasht* and to look towards them from *Persepolis* awakens thoughts of the vanity of human greatness. Commonplace moralising is distasteful enough, but even the most commonplace person could hardly visit *Persepolis* without feeling some touch of genuine pity and reverence." Edward Stack.

Seth Nusserwanji and His Family



Seth Nusserwanji H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Makki N. H. C. Dinshaw, Master Cowasjee Nusserwanji, Mrs. Frenibai Nusserwanji

> "When one takes into account the fate of *Persepolis* it is wonderful how so much delicate detail remains almost as fresh and clear as the day it was chiselled.....Xerxes, Darius, Alexander the Great, all are gone, but the record of their greatness will stand before the world as long as the platforms and columns of *Persepolis* remain." John Horne.

"The builders of *Persepolis*" says Elizabeth Ruth must have been remarkable men. After a lapse of more than 2000 years its pillars stand as if they were the work of yesterday. They have withstood the ravages of time and nature and the elements and have displayed their glory to the world for generations. The men who have built the city have perished but their work remains to testify to their worth. *Persepolis* which was the home of culture, the capital of the great Persian Empire, whose beautiful architecture has withstood earthquakes and the attacks of Alexander the Great and the wilder onslaughts made by the Arab hordes in the 7th century stirs in every student of history memories of a glorious past." It is believed that the beautiful buildings on *Takht-e-Jamshyd* were built by the Emperor Darius, Histasp, Xerxes and Artaxerexes. Sir Hormusjee described his reactions in these glowing terms:

> "I bowed with all respect when I put my foot on the first step of the throne of Jamshyd and ascending my mind was full of the greatness of this country. Going further I viewed with admiration the Imperial pillars and marvelled at the beautiful work. Thinking of those great souls I could only

say a prayer to their memory and then proceed to their graves where the Emperors are laid in Eternal rest. On the monuments at *Nakshe Rustum* are carved the *Fawhars* and in front of these a rounded room has been erected which Iranian Muslims call "*Kabe-Zarthust.*"

It was but natural that the land of his ancestors should make a deep and lasting impression on Sir Hormusjee. We Indians who have seen *Parsees* as part and parcel of our own country forget that their roots are in a different soil and that in their hearts is the ache and urge of the exile for their native land. The great crowds that we see celebrating *Jamshedi Navroz* with great feasting and joy is a symbol of their love and this hidden urge towards Iran. This day, the birthday of the Emperor Jamshyd who was not only deeply religious but just and realised his responsibility to his people as few rulers have done. It is believed that agriculture originated with this great Emperor who first had the idea of planting things in the ground, who first conceived that land could be fruitful and could contribute to human welfare in that it could feed humanity. He discovered the relative merits of different plants and flowers. It was also he who first dug mountains in order to find minerals, who found diamonds and other precious stones. Wearing was introduced in his time as were agricultural implements. The Emperor was also the first to cut down trees in forests in order to make roadways, and thus establishing communication he benefitted trade in the country. During his reign wine began to be distil-

led. He laid the foundation of the beautiful palace known as "*Chehl Minar*". Unfortunately although the state flourished to the last under his rule the Emperor himself suffered a strange reversal. Having achieved great and mighty things he began to consider himself a divine being, lost all sense of proportion and became so puffed with pride that his interest in political affairs lessened and he eventually met his death at the hands of Zohak. His beautiful palace "*Chehel Minar*" is no longer in existence but the ruins give us some idea of its past glory and are symbolic of the tragedy of greatness losing itself in vain glorious pride.

Sir Hormusjee proceeded from here to Debbid and thence to Yezd stopping at Rehmatabad where he visited one of the loveliest gardens to be seen any where in the world. From here he was taken in procession accompanied by all the biggest officers of the State and a huge and imposing military array to Yezd where he was accorded a prodigious welcome.

As if for a festival the Muslim and Iranian population had turned out in large numbers to greet Sir Hormusjee at the gates of the city. As soon as he came to the portals of the town he was garlanded by the President of the *Yezd Anjuman*, schoolboys waiving flags came marching along to the tune of a Persian welcome song specially composed for the occasion. Then all the distinguished residents of the place were introduced and the procession con-

sisting of cavalry, *Parsee* students, members of the *Anjuman* and Muslim residents of Yezd and the populace mended its way along the thoroughfare reaching their destination amidst prolonged cheer and applause. The balconies of the houses on both sides of the road were thronged by men and women who threw rose petals and rice on Sir Hormusjee. Old women wept for joy and there was a feeling of exaltation all round which was shared by the chief guest as they arrived at their destination. In reply to the address of welcome presented by the *Jarthosti Anjuman* of Yezd on this occasion Sir Hormusjee said:

> "It is with feelings of unlimited pleasure and pride that I have stepped on the shores of Iran. It was the home that the *Parsees* of India are beginning to look upon it as their Motherland, and that the Muslim Government of Iran have granted the same rights to their Parsee subjects as to the Muslims. I hope you will take advantage of the opportunities offered to you and the blessings granted to you by Providence to improve your lot. When our ancestors left Iran on account of religious persecution you bravely bore it and for this courage you deserve our heartfelt admiration. Fortunately for you times have changed and I sincerely hope you will take advantage of this and at every possible opportunity co-operate with and help the Muslim Government. Do not let any thought of emigration enter your minds but instead work wholeheartedly for the prosperity and greatness of your Motherland and the happiness and welfare of your Muslim brethren."

In Yezd Sir Hormusjee visited several Zoroas-

trian institutions including the Sir Ratan Tata Charitable Medical and Surgical Hall, the Marker Orphanage and other schools and was pleased to note how well each of these was functioning and how healthy, cheerful and happy the inmates were. He donated Rs. 1,500 to the Marker Orphanage and a large sum to other schools where he noticed with satisfaction that Muslim children were also admitted.

He also visited the Zoroastrian Women's *Anjuman* which body presented him with an address of welcome in the course of which they said:

> "We, the women of Yezd hold the *Parsees* of India in great respect. We are thankful to them for the feelings of sympathy and affection they have shown us. They are ever ready to lend a helping hand in our troubles and the feeling that such an influential community is ready to take an interest in our affairs stands us in good stead. That we have the solid backing of so many helpful people has given us a certain sort of standing in this country and the attitude of our Muslim countrymen towards us has consequently improved."

Sir Hormusjee was deeply affected by the sentiments expressed in this address and in reply very feelingly said:

> "In my life I have received several addresses but never one from women who belong to the ancient land of my forefathers. It gives me great pleasure to see that you love our ancient religion and do all

in your power to inculcate this love in your children. I feel sure that your future is assured. It is always women who can best maintain the spirit of a religion and it is up to you to carry on the traditional teachings of our great Prophet and that you are not failing in this is to me a matter for sincerest satisfaction. I congratulate you on this achievement and suggest that your objective should be such that not a single woman should remain ignorant of the precepts and dictates of her religion. To assist you however slightly in the glorious work you are doing and merely as a token of encouragement I should like to subscribe Rs. 1,000 towards the Fund of your Association with my warmest wishes for its continued success and prosperity."

In Yezd Sir Hormusjee had an interview with the *Hakam* who received him cordially. Proceeding to Kerman which can boast of a number of historical relics such as the *Kille Ardeshir* the ruins of the fire-temple, and the dome of Jubilee. Sir Hormusjee interviewed as in other cities all its prominent officials, civil and military and visited the various institutions. He donated with his usual benevolence a sum of Rs. 5,000 to the *Anjuman* and was able to bring about a reconciliation between two sections of the *Anjuman* who were not on good terms with one another.

The day Sir Hormusjee returned to Yezd being consecrated to *Sarosh Yezd* he visited the fire temple, and participated in the prayers at the Towers of Silence as according to the *Fasli* calendar this day was to be observed in religious ceremonial at the *Dakhmas*. Sir Hormusjee impressed the people of



Sir Hormusjee and The Sultan of Lahej at the Aden Centenary Celebrations.

Yezd by his simplicity of manner and gracious dignity. Out of his wide experience he was able to give them very good advice on problems concerning their social welfare. During his stay in Iran he was accessible to people of all classes and kept himself occupied all the time. He always strove to impress on the Iranians one great precept that every individual should strive hard to gain success, should be self-reliant, should help himself so that he learns to be independent and self-sufficient; and if, after making the effort he applied for any sort of assistance it would be forthcoming for individuals like God above prefer to help those who help themselves: he asked them not to bank very much on the wealth of their co-religionists in India for this would engender a servility undesirable for the soul.

Sir Hormusjee visited the great physical culture institute in Yezd. He was shown all the exercises which the students were taught to perform and was struck by the fact that they were all performed to the accompaniment of good music—this gave the pupils a certain sort of zest and vigour.

On the last day of his stay in Yezd the students gave him an address and the local *Anjuman* two beautiful specimens of Persian carpets for which Yezd is so justly famous. Sir Hormusjee returned their kindness a thousandfold distributing money liberally on all sides. He was really pleased to see the physical fitness and good health of its citizens and was especially happy to note the fact that not a single Iranian Zoroastrian begged on the streets.

Persia was not then as fully developed as she is now. Often there were no roadways available but Sir Hormusjee in spite of his old age waded through all the inconvenience which his travel in Iran entailed. He completed all the work he had set out to do, visiting even the most inaccessible places which were in any way connected with his religion. On leaving the country he generously appreciated the services not only of his servants and personal staff but all those individuals who had helped however slightly to make his holiday a success. To commemorate his visit to Yezd he presented the *Anjuman* with a huge silver cup and in a farewell message wishing them all happiness he said how thankful he felt to Almighty God for having given him the strength in the advanced years of his life to visit the glorious land of his great and noble ancestors. From Persia Sir Hormusjee went on to Caucassia, Russia, Germany, Austria, France and England. He visited all the capitals of Europe and landed in Bombay in the December of 1925, rejoining his friends and admirers who had gathered in a large body on the Mole to welcome him and who were overjoyed to have him once again in their midst.

His visit to Iran had been an unqualified success. Just as some mighty conqueror by a series of triumphs acquires merit and glory for himself so Sir Hormusjee after landing on Iranian soil by his gracious manners, good breeding and dignity had won the hearts of the people he visited. He had

been able to study at first hand the social and political condition of the Irani Zoroastrians to bring about a harmonious relationship between Muslims and Zoroastrians in Persia to impress the former as to the merit of those Parsees who had settled in India and to bring Zoroastrians in both countries in closer touch. Not only this but he had been able to win the affection and esteem of all Government officials, the blessings of the Iranian population and had done real service to his own community and his co-religionists in Persia. All this he had been able to achieve by his simplicity, modesty, graciousness and generosity and of all those qualities which add to the beauty and goodness of life. Sir Hormusjee's objects in the travel of Persia were to study the present social and economic condition of the ancient Fatherland, with a view to devise means for its regeneration and more especially to find means for the amelioration of his co-religionists residing there. He had handsomely given large sums of money to Zoroastrians for educational purposes in Shiraz, Teheran, Yezd and Kerman. He was accorded a royal reception by the Persian Government. He succeeded in all he had set out to achieve. It is said that during his short stay in Iran he gave Rs. 15,000 to various deserving causes. Coming back from Iran Sir Hormusjee took greater interest in the work of the Iran League. He has always been a great admirer of the Persian language and often advises Parsee parents to teach it to their children. He supports two classes for the study of Persian literature and has also started a fund for

giving Iranian Zoroastrians an education benefitting modern times.

The *Shah Nameh* of Firdausi ranks among the world's greatest epics. He portrays with all the genius of his great poetic art the glorious past of Iran. Great *savants* of Persian history and literature have alluded to him in terms of the deepest respect in the following terms: "Firdausi is a glorious monument of Eastern genius and learning..... He is the father and great master of Persian poetry, the reviver of Persian language and Persian history and the restorer of Persian civilization.....If Firdausi was not born, then perhaps there would be no trace of Persian National Spirit and Persian language. If Firdausi had not written the *Shah-Nameh*, Persian history would not be in our hands and the factors of Persian National Unity would have been lost."

"For indeed, but for Firdausi, Persia would have forgotten its own glorious past and its wonderful history.....One can indeed boldly say that had there been no Firdausi, there would have been no national spirit in Iran. And if the revival of the national spirit had not taken place, the rising and patriotic Iran of to-day would not have been there either. One person and one person alone saved Persia from this calamity by his burning patriotism, and that was immortal Firdausi. This was his mission and patriotism was his message."

"Firdausi was burning with patriotism for his

country with its former greatness and culture. He saw with an aching heart that except among the *Dehqans*, the story of his country was being forgotten, and except in the hidden books of the *Moubeds* of the ancient faith, no record was to be found anywhere of the history and culture, of the eminence and glory, of his beloved country during its glorious past. Of course he knew that all great religions with God for its centre of worship, and truth for its path, led to the same goal, and thus he could have understood Persia's adoption of the religion of the Arabs. But he must have observed that side by side the Persian nation was forgetting its own history and its own culture too. The story of Solomon was replacing the glory of Jamshyd. The teachings of Moses and Abraham were more attended to than the philosophy of the Zoroaster. The glamour of the Caliphs was extinguishing the memory of the great and glorious Emperors of Iran. The exploits of Omar and Vakkas were overshadowing the heroic memories of Rustom and Sohrab, of Shahpoor the great and Naushirvan, the Just."

"If Firdausi is studied carefully, it will be found that he is not merely a great epic poet, narrating heroic legends and facts, historical and mythical. The greatness lies in the fact that apart from his beauty of diction and style, apart from the virile strength to be found in his language, he was the master of the poet's art in many other respects. The poems of Zal and Rudabeh, Rustom and Tehmineh, Bizhun and Manizeh are first rate poems of love.

Whereas the stories of Zahhak and Jamshyd, Shiavush and Farangis, Rustom and Sohrab, show the power of his pen in dealing with tragedies. Just as the material at his disposal was immense, he did justice to various poetical aspects in which the materials presented themselves. Rightly indeed he is called the king of all the Persian Poets."

Reza Shah has built a beautiful monument to mark his resting place and made atonement as it were for the great insult which had been inflicted on the poet a thousand years ago. Sir Hormusjee has always been a great admirer of Firdausi and spoke with great feeling when he visited his tomb. He said:

> "For the last thousand years Firdausi has not been forgotten. His memory is alive in the hearts of men and it will be so for centuries to come. What the Parsees remember of their past greatness is due to Firdausi. There are inimitable and unbreakable chains which bind this poet and his work to the Parsees of Iran; it is a source from which one gains all knowledge; it is accounted the greatest religious book in Persia and proves that Firdausi was not only a great writer and poet but a philosopher and historian and a great student of human nature. The *Shah-Nameh* expresses sentiments and ideals of a very high order and stresses the importance of purity in living. Modern Muslim Iran regards the heroes of ancient Persia with the same admiration that we do—those hereoes who combined in themselves courage and nobility and this is due to the *Shah-Nameh*. A man ignorant of Firdausi is looked down upon by Muslims in India and Persia where the respect given to

Parsees is a direct result of their great heritage which has been unfolded to them by Firdausi. Firdausi is often called the Homer of the East. What that poet did for Greece, Vyas and Valmiki for India and the Hindus, Shakespeare for England and the English, Victor Hugo for France, Pushkin for Russia, Sir Walter Scott for Scotland and her people, Emre-ul-Kais and Mut Nabbi did for Arabia, Firdausi achieved for Persia and her people. In the field of poetry the *Shah-Nameh* is supreme; it mirrors and depicts the greatness of ancient Iran which burns as brightly through the world today because of this undying verse. And just as this greatness lives the memory of the great artist himself survives in the hearts of men."

Sir Hormusjee gave a donation of a thousand rupees in memory of Firdausi and expressed feelings of the greatest admiration for him. On his return to India when he spoke as the President of the Iran League in Bangalore Sir Hormusjee said:

"I believe that the activities of the Iran League augur well for the community and has been formed with a view to helping the Parsees in future. I was glad to notice while I was travelling in Persia that the Mahommedans there regard us with friendly feelings, and the aristocrats consider us to be of their own class. If we go out to Iran it should not be with the object of amassing millions, but to prove our honesty, courage, industry and worth. It is wise to make our boys and girls study Persian and no opportunity should be missed to spread a knowledge of our religion not only among our co-religionists but also among Mussalmans."

Speaking as President at the annual meeting

of the Iran League Sir Hormusjee pointed out how the League had always tried to further social contacts between Parsees and Iranians and had gained their objective, and attempted to better the condition of the 12,000 Zoroastrian residents in Iran, educating the younger generation to a very large extent. Lady Tata had done much to bring the two communities together by opening a free dispensary to which all were admitted regardless of caste or creed and a Committee of women in Yezd as well as the Iran League were furthering the same cause. Sir Hormusjee also mentioned how a colony of Zoroastrians had emigrated to Khuzistan a province of Western Persia and the Iranian Government had provided them with various facilities including a railway and a port to be named "Bunder Shapur" which was expected to play a large part in the commercial ventures of the future. The Iranian Government were also repairing the "Sudde Havaz" a *bund* built in the Sassanian period of Persian history and when this is completed thousands of square miles in Khuzistan would be watered by the fresh waters from the Bahrein well. The famous writer, Aga Poure Dawood in corroboration with the Iran League had done much to spread knowledge about the Zoroastrian religion in Iran and this knowledge had brought about a spirit of tolerance, amity and friendship between two people. Finally Sir Hormusjee appealed to his Parsee co-religionists in India to continue taking that interest which they have always taken and giving the help they have so ungrudgingly given

to Iranians in the past so that contact between the two countries be maintained and cemented in every way.

Although Sir Hormusjee spent only two and a half months in Iran he was able in that period to study every aspect of the country because of his trained powers of observation, his acumen and knowledge of human nature. He particularly admired the industry, the education, the interest in religion, the hospitality and the treatment meted out to minorities in Iran. In the course of a speech he once said:

> "From what we have seen and heard we find the condition of Zoroastrians at Shiraz, Yezd, Kerman and Teheran much better than what is realised in Bombay..... The Zoroastrians in the villages are not so prosperous; but they are happy in their little homes and are self-supporting, and are in a better condition than many of the Bombay Parsees."

This he attributed to a certain self-respect which they had. He noticed that they disliked living on doles, that they were physically fit specially in the villages and showed remarkable energy and industry—all the help they got from the Parsees was either in the field of education or industry and this kept up their self-respect. He had noticed that their chief occupation was agriculture. The rainfall on an average is only 7 inches per year so that agriculture is mainly dependent on irrigation. Where there is no cultivation the country presents a barren spectacle and in this respect it resembles Aden.

Even the mountainous regions are arid and in most parts there is need for water. Where there are irrigation schemes or where the rain water is plentiful the land is like a bit of Paradise.

Northern Iran has a rainfall of 40 inches and there the chief products are cotton, tobacco, opium, silk, carpets and wood. The Iranian Government in recent years has done much to help agriculture and German and American ploughs and machines have been adopted with beneficial results.

Turning to industry Sir Hormusjee had noticed that owing to a lack in the means of communication big machinery was very difficult to import and could only be taken after a great deal of expenditure had been incurred. The trade in South Iran was mainly in the hands of Punjabi Shikarpuris from whom the Iranis buy small quantities on credit and get a little profit on their sales. In North Persia trade is in the hands of Baghdadi and Armenian Jews but if a concern on a large scale were started by Zoroastrians good results might be expected. In order to encourage the textile industry the Iranian Government insists on every Government official and servant wearing the cloth produced in Iran. The opium trade is extensive but it is feared that the revenue from this is likely to diminish owing to the intensive propaganda carried on against its use by the League of Nations Union. Americans have started carpet factories where they employ girls in large numbers. Brewing is also found to be very profitable and is chiefly now in

Sir Hormusjee and His Family



Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw, Kt., Mr. Nusserwanji H. C. Dinshaw, Mrs. Frenibai N. H. C. Dinshaw, Master Cowasjee N. H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Makki N. H. C. Dinshaw, Bai Manekbai Hormusjee

the hands of Jews and Armenians. Oil fields are very productive and have a great future before them. The Anglo Persian Oil Co. owns the oil wells to the west of Iran from which the Government obtains good royalties. Sugar-factories and coal-mines are abundant and have great possibilities for future development. There is no doubt that there are several fields of commerce and industry in Iran waiting to be explored and developed. The Iran League has appointed an Industrial and Commercial Committee in Iran which is sure to help the Parsees in future. Sir Hormusjee is of opinion that for the progress of the country education should be widespread. Only if they are cultured—and that in the right sense of the word—does he think will the Parsees of Iran gain the good opinion of their countrymen. There is a need for schools in the villages inhabited by Parsees.

As far as religion went, Sir Hormusjee said he had noticed that some of the Iranian Zoroastrians were inclined to Bahaism the religion of Bahaulla. "On talking with several Zoroastrian Bahais, they expressed that by joining the Bahai brotherhood the Zoroastrians came in contact with Mahommedan families and that created a very good feeling between the two communities. They also say the Bahais respect the Zoroastrian religion and that in fact a Bahai is not a Bahai if he is not a true Zoroastrian." Whether Bahaism is a distinct religion or a society working for the ideal of human brotherhood cannot be easily ascertained. But larger num-

bers every day are joining the sect and to keep the torch of Zoroastrianism alive it would be advisable to inculcate in the generation now growing up a love for this religion by pointing out to them its beauties. In Persia, there are now only 12,000 Zoroastrians. They are good citizens, humble, honest and generous, especially to their own brethren and are also industrious, intelligent, handsome, clean in appearance and faithful to their religion.

Dwelling on the hospitality of the Iranis Sir Hormusjee said that wherever he had gone he had not only been warmly welcomed but received with enthusiasm and affection as a descendant of the ancient Iranians in the whole of Iran from Bushire to Pahelvi. Sir Hormusjee had found a spirit of hospitality and cheery welcome in Persia. Today the Zoroastrians number about 12,000. They are self-respecting, industrious, honest and generous and under Reza Shah's able guidance are working for and achieving their own progress. Although Iran throughout her history has had to face several vicissitudes the spirit of the Persian nation has lived through them all. There was a time when its glory was the envy of the world, when its culture was distinct, when its mode of living won universal admiration. Then came its fall during which period her people went through suffering and hardship patient and uncomplaining. After the passing of centuries the tide has turned again and Iran has come into her own again, under the wise leadership

of Reza Shah. From being dependent it has achieved all possible freedom. It has progressed in every direction in education in Government in religion and this remarkable progress has arrested the attention of the whole world. No wonder then that Parsees, exiles from their ancient land—revere the country of their ancestors. The Emperor Reza Shah sent a message of goodwill to the Parsees through Sir Hormusjee in which he said "Iran will be glad to welcome the Parsee descendants of the Iranians and I feel sure they will be able to achieve a great deal for the country by their education, honesty, energy and the vast resources at their command."

Sir Hormusjee even today holds the opinion that contact with Iran will be truly beneficial and help the Parsees in future and that any movement capable of helping in this direction should receive the assistance of all sections of the community.

CHAPTER VII

Sir Hormusjee and Politics

IN politics Sir Hormusjee belongs to that group almost extinct today: the Moderate Liberals. Sir Muncherji Bhownagree, Sir Dinsha Watchha and Sir Prabhashanker Pattani were his comrades and their deaths have left him the sole survivor. He does not believe in anything but a middle course in politics. Although his long sojourn at Aden did not allow him to take as active a part in politics as his conferes he contributed the benefit of his experience as the late Jamshetji Tata did. Sir Hormusjee does not possess Sir Phirozeshah Mehta's gift of oratory, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji's political knowledge, Sir Dinshaw Mulla's legal wisdom nor Sir Dinsha Watchha's industrial acumen, but he has remarkable business capacity and can bring to bear on politics a mind trained to the just observation of men and affairs. He is a Liberal but his liberalism is more philosophic than political. There is no communalism about it nor does he stand for personal aggrandisement as he has nothing whatever to gain from his contribution to the political life of the country. He is not a visionary but practical to the very core of his being and never does anything without due consideration. His views are instinct with that spirit of Liberalism which inspired in England men like John Bright, William Ewart Gladstone, Lord Morley, Asquith, Lloyd

George and Sir John Simon and in our own country personages like Lord Sinha, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, The Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Pheroze Sethna, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani and Pandit Kunzru. He is not only independent in his views but plays a courageous part in India's fight for freedom. In many ways he does practical good to the country. The Liberals in India are not inspired by love of popularity. They put before them whatever is likely to benefit the country first and although Liberalism is a fast dying cult because of its lack of appeal to the man in the street its ranks boast of men whose patriotism is unquestionable and whose sacrifices for their country are second to none. The Liberals believe in constitutional methods and are averse to breaking laws. Hence the popularity of their creed has waned even in England while in India they have no future before them. In spite of this, however, Sir Hormusjee is a staunch Liberal and takes an active part in the work of the famous Western India National Liberal Association of which he is a Vice-President with Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad as its President. In India the word "Liberal" is not thoroughly understood and appreciated by the people. Congressites, socialists, Communists, *Mahasabhaites* and Muslim Leaguers blow their trumpets so hard that Liberalism cannot make itself heard. It is a quiet and reticent creed and does not know of a way of acquiring *Swaraj* within six months. There is

nothing spectacular in their programme like going to jails or walking in processions shouting slogans or inciting the mob to frenzied communal feelings. They believe in British justice and generosity and as representatives of a wealthy class of society they have little in their ideals to appeal to the man in the street. The Liberals in India do not want Government control in trade and stand for independence. But they believe in their country working side by side with Britain for the good of both and assisting each other to fulfil their respective destinies.

Though small in number the Indian Liberals are intellectually alive. Their ranks boast of some of our greatest lawyers, commercial magnets, educationists, social workers and journalists. Their stable views have gained them a certain respect and in a crisis they are approached by Government for their advice and help. We may divide the stalwarts of Liberalism into three distinct groups: those who are Liberal by temperament, education, custom and tradition and accept the British connection and ideals *in toto*; those who have become Liberals out of self-interest and those who change their political opinions as often and as easily as they change their clothes to suit their purpose. The Liberal party has suffered much because of the last two classes of its adherents.

Those people who ten years ago took an active part in the Liberal Federation have now joined the

Congress for motives of self-interest and this has shaken the confidence of the public in the Liberal Party, which however has played an important part, in fact a pioneering role in the public life of this country. Speaking abo it liberal principles a great writer once observed "Moderatism is not a creed. It is a philosophical attitude and has as its greatest virtue the mental capacity and inclination to see and appreciate every aspect of a problem. It is this broad-mindedness alone which enables the Liberal to be of service to the country." The ideals of this creed then are not only sane and balanced but based on equity and justice, and it is just these qualities possessed in such a large measure by the Liberals themselves which has enabled them to make a valuable and lasting contribution to the political life of India. Their experiences, tact and foresight have stood them in very good stead in dealing with a race which displays and prizes such qualities above all others. The Liberals and the Government respect each other and the latter always meets any demands the party happens to put forward. Both during the Simon Commission and at the Round Table Conference representatives of the Liberal group impressed on the British Government that they stood for the political independence of India and would have achieved more for their country had it not been for the obstructionist tactics adopted by the British Government at Whitehall and Congress in India. When all is considered it seems a real tragedy to think that the Liberals have so little support in India today. Their political

programme stresses two important points—one, continued association with the British and two, the attainment of complete independence by constitutional methods within the Empire. This includes complete provincial autonomy at the start and gradual attainment of responsibility at the centre as experience of government is gained the allotment of posts to Indians including provincial governorships, the Indianisation of all the services including the army and perfect liberty to Indians in the conduct of political and social affairs and larger representation in the Councils and assemblies. They feel that education should be Indianised and the States should also co-operate in Federation and give substantial powers to their subjects: that laws should be administered well and that justice should be within the reach of every individual; that measures should be taken for the alleviation of poverty and unemployment and that India should gain complete independence gradually within the British Empire. This stipulation in view of the International situation seems very important and far-sighted.

It is natural that Liberalism as a creed should not appeal to the masses in India, the party holds its session once a year where discreet and rhetorical orations are delivered and a little mild humour indulged in at the expense of the Congress party. After the Session, they disperse and no other activity is indulged in except occasional interviews to newspapermen on subjects of political and social importance. Although the Liberals are genuinely

patriotic they do not seem to have much enthusiasm and have not like the Congress captured the imagination of the masses. The Liberals have to reconcile themselves to the sober fact that they will never be able to recapture the Congress. They have never carried the country with them. They never will. Even when they had the control of the Congress, they were not really popular. For the masses and the middle classes their creed is much too jejune, their political philosophy much too reticent, their programme without spice and without sparks. Never more will they command the applause of the populace. Never more will they drive the national chariot ostentatiously forward.

Moderation is a creed which does not appeal to the man in the street as against communism and socialism which guarantee complete freedom to the individual. The Liberals too are not in direct personal contact with the masses of India. A certain aloofness characterises their attitude and for them there is not the same urgency for obtaining *Swaraj* as their own position is financially sound. Their ranks too are divided, and this is a great drawback considering the smallness of their numbers, and whenever their faith in Britishers and officials is shaken they do not hesitate to say so even at Westminster.

Sir Hormusjee forms a connecting link between the old and new school of Liberals. Sir Hormusjee also forms a connecting link between the old generation and the new one. His political ideal and poli-

tical method are the ideal and the method of the generation that preceded him. Sir Hormusjee's patriotism is marked by sanity and self-control. His method of criticism is characterized by animated moderation. There is independence of spirit and searching criticism. But the undertone is a deep and rational feeling of loyalty. That loyalty is as much based on reason as on self-interest. He looks upon the British connection in the light of a Providential dispensation not merely in the spirit of fatalism but with strong faith of reasoned conviction. His criticism of administrative measures is consequently broad-minded, rational and based on a thorough knowledge of facts. It is marked by sobriety and thoughtfulness and wise insight into the needs of the hour. Yet it is far from being of a halting or a hesitating character. His political convictions are allied to those of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad who is foremost among Liberals today due to his legal acumen and knowledge of political affairs. As President of the Liberal Federation his oration was valuable and praiseworthy. Sir Hormusjee and Sir Chimanlal are intimate friends. He is a friend of the British Empire but does not hesitate to criticise the Government whenever occasion demands. He believes that by some special dispensation of Providence the destinies of the two countries have been united and that it is the British who have brought safety and prosperity to our shores and will continue to do so till the end.

It cannot be denied that India is under great



Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw Kt., O.B.E., M.V.O.

obligation to the British. England has to her credit many humanitarian efforts but in nothing has she succeeded more than in the unity she has brought to the heterogenous masses of India. She has revived the ancient tradition of respect to women. She has built railways and canals, has admirably administered the country in matters of education, law and health. She has above all helped to create public opinion in India which in its turn has brought about a united front in the matter of political demands and she has established peace and order all over the country. With the spread of education religious fanaticism has disappeared, provincial intercourse has increased and several other benefits have accrued to India. Sir Hormusjee believes that our connection with Britain will make India powerful not only in Asia but also in Europe and the world. He believes in Federation and feels that it should be tried out, the Government and the governed co-operating in a spirit of sympathy, helpfulness with each other.

Sir Hormusjee does not take an active part in public life as he is averse to speechifying and popular applause and rarely attends political meetings. On the few occasions however when he does make a speech his utterances are marked by wisdom, common sense and a feeling of reality. He is however a true patriot and like Dr. Dadabhoy Nowroji and Sir Phirozeshah Mehta considers himself an Indian first and a Parsee afterwards. He was a Congressman as long as that body advocated constitutional methods of obtaining freedom but when it

departed from such a policy he joined the ranks of the Moderates in spite of having great personal regard for Mr. Gandhi whom he considers to be the saviour of his country. Sir Hormusjee and the Mahatma are great personal friends and he believes that the great national awakening which India has witnessed in recent years is solely and wholly due to the sage of Sabarmati.

In this critical period in the history of India and in the framing of the new constitution British influence is wholly essential. Speaking about Britain's contribution to India Mr. Pollard wrote: "..... a government suffers for its virtues, and the steady efforts of Great Britain to civilize and educate its Eastern subjects have tended to destroy the divisions which made common action, common aspirations, public opinion and self-government impossible in India..... They have built railways and canals, which made communications and contact unavoidable; they have imposed common measures of health, common legal principles, and a common education in English culture and methods of administration. The result has been to foster a consciousness of nationality, the growth of a public opinion, and a demand for a greater share in the management of affairs. The more efficient a depotism, the more certain is its suppression; and the problem for the Indian Government is how to adjust and adapt political emancipation of the natives of India to the slow growth of their education and sense of responsibility." Western education is the direct product of the British rule. It

has sown the seed of all kinds of reform. It is a great instrument of progress and national unity. It has pushed the national life among modern lines. It has introduced peace and order. It has purified the methods of administration and held up equality as the principle of action in its dealings with the subject race. Years and years must roll on before India will be able to take her rank with the progressive nations of the West. But the start is given, the beginning is made by the guiding genius of England. Whatever may be the drawbacks of the British rule, it is in the main beneficient. In the 19th century certain historians declared that India being a conquered country she had no right to self-government. This conception seems ridiculous to us who consider patriotism and a love of independence as the finest of human virtues. The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri once said: "Patriotism by itself is not enough. It is a noble, powerful, exalted emotion. It is only an emotion. It has got to be directed into useful, fruitful channels, and that can only be the case, if every worker prepared himself by arduous study, by patient survey of the realities of India's life and by an appreciation on the spot of the variety of things and circumstances of each particular locality." Patriotism then is not a virtue easily discovered and its acquisition is not an easy matter. India has had to go through much suffering in order to acquire this quality and by reason of the sacrifices of her sons and daughters has established her right to freedom. She is still striving for this glorious end, and her one need today is

unity. It is up to every individual to drown all religious, political and communal differences and to present to the world the spectacle of a united nation. The fact that India has worked provincial autonomy so well goes to prove that Indians are not behind hand in political matters or in the conduct of Government. They have shouldered their responsibilities with great courage and in spite of want of experience have emerged out of the test with flying colours. The "Times of India" in a very thought-provoking article says: "What the people of India want, instead of impracticable schemes, is a continuation of the realistic policy governing recent internal developments. The decision of our political parties, and particularly the Congress, to work provincial autonomy despite its numerous faults—real and imaginary—will prove to be one of the most remarkable mile-stones in the history of this country. It has demonstrated not only to India but to the world that the Indian people are capable of governing themselves. It shows that the Government of India Act, despite its imperfections, does confer real power on the representatives of the people. India's action on these lines is a striking triumph for realism in politics. Our next step is the logical one of taking power at the centre. Here the problem is complicated by factors such as the necessity of including the Indian States in a United Federal India, and of accepting the temporary reservation of defence, external affairs and certain special powers." Sir Hormusjee, then, we have

seen has very stable ideas on politics and they represent the ideas of most members of his community. He has seen from his own experience that moderation pays and as a very sincere well-wisher of his country wishes that its political life may be guided by such a creed.

We have seen that in politics Sir Hormusjee's views are remarkable for their extreme sanity and forethought: they are even fairly representative of the community of which he is the leader. Not only, as a community, are the Parsees loyal to the British *Raj* but from the very day, the British set foot on Indian soil, they have believed in their sense of justice and fair play. The Parsees have faith in the Hindus; they like the Muslims and Indian Christians have not asked for separate electorates or for special representation in the Council houses of India; they realise that any form of merit would be appreciated by the mass of Indians; they have done much for the country which has become their home for the last 1300 years; they have been able to gain the confidence of their British rulers and we hope that in the India of the future they will work with the same enthusiasm, the same grit and the will to succeed for which qualities they have been so justly famous. Their contribution in the regeneration of this new India should be worthy of their great ancestors, who looked upon the country of their adoption as their motherland and served it faithfully and to the best of their ability during their lifetime.

CHAPTER VIII

Sir Hormusjee and other Parsee Philanthropists

CUMBERLAND, a well-known English author, wrote many years ago that charity should begin at home but that there is no reason why it should not end abroad. A man no sooner he is born should not claim any community or country as his own but pride himself in being a citizen of the world. It is but natural that he might have a partiality for his own co-religionists or his own birthplace but that should not debar him from having a generous feeling for the welfare of the whole world. Regard for others should never be circumscribed by the boundaries of community or country but should be international and universal.

This was the guiding principle of the life of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, the first Parsee Baronet and Sir Hormusjee has ever kept this precept before his mind's eye. Sir Jamsetjee was a great philanthropist and embodied in him the traits of true Zoroastrian culture and benevolence. He showed to India and indeed to the world the paths of catholic charity. Sir Hormusjee likewise with his cosmopolitan benevolence, responded to every call on his purse. Whether the object of his charity was to benefit the Parsees or Hindus, Moslems or Christians, it was

not his concern. Like Sir Jamsetjee he is out to alleviate distress and serve God by serving his creatures. Both of them realised that charity and benevolence were the perfection and ornaments of their religion and their souls migrated into the bodies of the poor and the needy identifying their existence with that of those in distress. They found their happiness in increasing the pleasures and satisfying the necessities of life of their humble brethren; they felt a peculiar delight in extinguishing or solacing their pains.

Sir Hormusjee is a perfect prototype of the great philanthropist Sir Jamsetjee and has imbibed all the noble qualities that distinguished the great Parsee potentate. Both of them believed in plain living and high thinking. A host of noble qualities are identical in them, namely, staunch Zoroastrianism, mildness of disposition, kindness of heart, nobility of head, perfect civility and God-fearingness.

As mentioned above, the souls of these benevolent personages did not reside so much in their own bodies as in those of others. Their lives to a great extent were a reflex of the lives of others. They have carved their names not on marbles but on the hearts of the people who will ever keep their memory green against the wintry blasts of forgetfulness.

Sir Dinshaw Petit, the second Baronet in the Parsee community, resembled Sir Hormusjee in

many respects and although he did much for his co-religionists, he cannot approach Sir Hormusjee in spontaneous beneficence and parental care of the community. Sir Dinshaw was not so complete in touch with the members of the sister communities as Sir Hormusjee is although the late Baronet had many genuine friends amongst Europeans, Hindus and Mahomedans.

Sir Dinshaw's activities, municipal, social, communal and political were varied. Sir Hormusjee had similarly a busy life in Aden and in later years in Bombay. There was not a single institution of public utility in both these cities, respectively, in which they were not directly or indirectly connected. As Trustees of the Parsee *Panchayet* they rendered yeoman's services to their community. In official, semi-official and social functions, both of them took conspicuous part, Sir Dinshaw was lavish with his money when the incoming or departing Governor was to be presented with an Address or entertained at a Banquet; and similarly as the head of the Indian community at Aden Sir Hormusjee had to read Addresses to Governors, Viceroys and members of the Royal Family crossing through Aden. As for the loyalty to the British Crown none can beat them, the services of both of them having been fittingly recognised, Sir Dinshaw's by the conferment upon him of the title of Baronetcy and Sir Hormusjee's by that of Knighthood, not to speak of the lesser honours which both of them received from the British as well as from Foreign Government.

The sympathies of both these *Sethias* for their co-religionists in Iran were phenomenal and they contributed large sums for their amelioration. Both of them very closely identified themselves with the Iranian Zoroastrians, Sir Dinshaw by becoming the first President of the Persian Zoroastrian Society, and Sir Hormusjee by founding the Iran League and becoming its Patron and President. If the Parsees of India are taking to-day more interest in the welfare of Iran and Iranian Zoroastrians, it is all due to both these gentlemen who were also supporters of Persian literature and scholarship. Sir Dinshaw appreciated and patronised Dr. Martin Haug, the great Avestan scholar, while Sir Hormusjee gave great encouragement to Aga Poure Dawood, the renowned interpreter of Parsee religious literature.

Sir Dinshaw became the Sheriff of Bombay, Vice-President of the Bombay Presidency Association, was appointed by Government to the Bombay Presidency Association, was appointed by Government to the Bombay Municipal Corporation and was the first Parsee member of the Imperial Council, an unique honour in the 19th century. Sir Hormusjee likewise was appointed to the Aden Municipality, Port Trust and Chamber of Commerce and was Consul for Portugal and Spain in that Port.

In short, as mentioned above, both Sir Dinshaw and Sir Hormusjee took peculiar delight in reliev-

ing distress, their hearts ever over-flowing with the milk of human kindness. Their acts of charity were always repaid by the consciousness of their having done some service to their fellowmen. It is for these qualities that Sir Dinshaw was and Sir Hormusjee is universally acknowledged to be the *Hatem Tais* of their community. With their hands on their conscience well could they explain in the words of Abraham Lincoln: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right —as God gives us to see the right—we have striven on the finish the work we were in."

Comparisons indeed are odious, but if we compare Jamsetjee Tata the great Captain of Indian Industry with Sir Hormusjee Adenwalla, it might be said, speaking generally, that the former lived for India, and the latter for Bombay and Aden. Tata was a citizen of the East as well as of the West, Hormusjee a citizen of the East but only a frequenter and an admirer of the West. Tata's sympathies did not go so deep as regards his own community whereas Sir Hormusjee was more a Parsee than an Indian. The Indian people worshipped Tata as a great industrialist the Parsees worshipped Sir Hormusjee as a great Parsee Philanthropist whose hand is as free as his heart is large. Benevolence is breathed into Sir Hormusjee by celestial inspiration, his love for his community is unbounded and he is by far the most popular figure amongst the Parsees of the present day. He resides in every Zoroastrian bosom and the whole

Parsee *Anjuman* is now seriously contemplating appreciating his services by raising a fit memorial to his unique munificence, more especially to the Parsees and generally to the public at large. With Voltaire he believes that mortals are equal though their religions differ and keeping this maxim before him, he lets his sun of philanthropy shine on those belonging to other communities as well. It is true that his affections for his own co-religionists are higher mounted than those for others but at the same time his helping hand reaches them all. His mind always moves at the distressing spectacle of misery and helplessness.

Sir Hormusjee is not an industrialist and though he has travelled to distant places, is particularly attached to India and to his community. He is thoroughly Eastern in his thoughts and hospitality, his home having been proverbially celebrated for its genuinely oriental warmth which all who have crossed Aden can well testify. When on their respective peregrinations Tata would enter Mills, Factories and other industrial concerns to gain experience and information with a view to introduce such concerns into India, Sir Hormusjee would be interested in Hospitals, Widows' Homes and other charitable institutions, and his mind would rebel if he did not render monetary assistance to the sick and the needy. Such was the difference between the two great Parsees, one entirely occidental and the other oriental in their respective outlook on human affairs.

Both Jamsetjee and Sir Hormusjee received sound education which endowed them with the sense of public duty. Both of them had inherited natural propensity to commercial enterprise from their respective fathers. One had returned from China and the other from Europe with great ideas.

The secret of the success of both of them lay inasmuch as that both were intelligent and resourceful and their penetrating vision enabled them to see things in their proper perspective. Both were scrupulously cautious and careful about their employees and were believers of personal supervision of their staff, Sir Hormusjee at Aden and Tata at Nagpore. Both of them started pension-funds for their employees because both believed that this fund along with the regular salaries of their employees was an inducement for regular attendance and that it served to smoothen the relations and the opposition of interest that might arise now and again between master and servants.

We have seen above that Tata was wholly nationalistic in outlook, he tried his hand at mills, silk industry, iron mines, Hydro-Electric works, scholarships for higher education open to all Indians; Sir Hormusjee on the other hand though cosmopolitan in sympathy is more attached to the Zoroastrians of India and Persia and is a Parsee of Parsees. Tata had been criticised for neglecting the interest of the poor of his community and not doing anything in particular for them, while the flow of Sir Hormusjee's charities though many a time run-

ning into various channels, is mostly diverted to his own community.

But charity need not necessarily be confined to helping those in distress and starving. On this subject both had divergent views none the less, both were inspired by noble ideals, Tata being more occidental and Sir Hormusjee more oriental in the diffusion of benevolence. But though the means were divergent the end was the same,—the good of humanity and both were great in their own way. To conclude, it cannot be gainsaid that there are few Parsees who can stand comparison today with Sir Hormusjee in his communal and cosmopolitan charities, and very few who can reach his level-headedness in all matters, religious, communal and political. Sir Hormusjee has a sincere and genuine attachment for the Zoroastrians of India and Persia, his loyalty to the British Crown is unbounded, and so far as Mahatma Gandhi's humanitarian activities are concerned he has every sympathy for them. He is indeed a unique personality and his services to his community and country will ever be enshrined in the grateful recollections of all his countrymen irrespective of colour or creed.

CHAPTER IX

Sir Hormusjee's Ideals

AMONG the Parsees of India Sir Hormusjee's name is a household word. In important matters relating to the community whether social, economic, literary religious or political: he plays a very prominent part. The community looks upon him with respect for the wisdom, honesty, solemnity, love of old ideals and traditions that he represents. In its love of Western ideals and education the community is groping in the dark and at this critical juncture accepts his wise guidance all of which augurs well for the future of the community.

The poverty and unemployment among the Parsees is engaging a great deal of Sir Hormusjee's attention although he is hopeful and optimistic about its future. He thinks the Parsees of the 19th century were more honest, hardworking, adventurous, self-respecting and religious than their descendants. They displayed more strength of character, morality and idealism than those of the present generation in whom a love of luxurious living has destroyed many of these traits. They do not like hard work but prefer soft jobs even though the returns in them are much less than in business which involves greater hardships. Consequently poverty is increasing among their ranks and unless a change of heart is effected no radical

cure will be found for this problem. During the 19th century when Hindus and Muslims on account of their customs and superstitions hesitated to travel to different countries adventurous Parsees took the opportunity provided for them by the British and travelled to China, Japan, Europe and Africa for trade and became prosperous. Today the Hindus and Mahommedans have awakened and are taking over this trade from the Parsees. The mill industry has also passed into their hands exclusively a Parsee concern some time ago. Consequently unemployment among the Parsees has increased. Besides these reasons for their poverty the Parsees are living a very luxurious life. They incur enormous expenditure for their *navjots*, weddings and death ceremonies. They spend lavishly on food and clothes, theatres, cinemas, restaurants, any and every place of amusement is crowded with Parsees. Families whose incomes are limited cannot do without servants and expenditure on all hands is excessive. The Parsee youth of today, too, shows very little interest in his religion. The pity of this is more emphasised in the case of the Parsees than with other communities as it was for their religion that their ancestors left their native soil and often suffering innumerable hardships landed on the shores of Iran. Unfortunately for them the priests are not learned enough to spread the message of Zoroaster among their numbers and this has contributed in a large measure to the decline of their religion.

Western ideals and education are playing a

large part in the life of the community. Literacy among the Parsees is higher than in any other Indian community but there is a tendency to superficial training which is not particularly advantageous. Some Modern Parsees believe that everything Western is good and every thing Eastern bad, consequently in their attempt to imitate the West they have not been able to succeed in acquiring anything but the outward semblance of English life. The Parsees in believing that what is good for Europe and Europeans is also good for them forget that Western civilization has its roots in the West and can be nothing but a hybrid on Indian soil. This unthinking attitude has also contributed to their downfall as has the spirit of dissension among their religious sects.

In the 19th century most of them lived in villages, were landowners and farmers employed in agriculture on a large scale and led healthy, happy pure and contented lives. They have now left their native villages, have given up agriculture, set aside their hard mode of living and now take pride in leading the easy life of the town. There are 60,000 Parsees in Bombay and in cases of unemployment instead of migrating to the villages like other communities they stay in the city and live on doles. The future does not seem very bright for the community but if their leaders and educationists unite much might yet be done to help them on. The Parsees should take up once again their independent business, give industrial education, make changes in their mode of living, spend less, show some reli-

gious fervour, and revive their past glory. Extravagant and luxurious living have brought them to this pass but luckily for them as Sir Hormusjee wisely observed to me in the course of his conversation one day their numbers are few and hence their problems can be more easily tackled than those of larger communities.

The Parsees of today do not believe in preserving their faculties and cultivating them. They have a flair for good living and this extravagance costs them dear and means suffering for themselves and their families. Marriages are consequently becoming fewer and while in European countries efforts are being made to increase the population among the Parsees no thought is given to the future.

It has been proved that however much of wisdom, energy, commercial acumen and tact a human being may possess when he is faced with continual financial strain and does not know where his next meal is coming from his finer qualities and instincts become warped. Prof. Phiroze Davar once talking about the Parsees said: "Parsees by nature are frank and guileless. There is no venom in their make-up. They love to be happy and to make others happy. There is nobility and magnanimity in their character. Whenever any member of the community is in trouble he receives ready sympathy and spontaneous and substantial help. Owing to the straitened financial circumstances of some Parsees that help is not as readily available as it used to be but there is nevertheless the willingness to help when-

ever and wherever assistance is required." It is unfortunate that with such a back-ground the present generation of the community does not strive to maintain the prestige in which they were held. Some of their old integrity and nobility is disappearing and as never before a few of their ranks have been accused of robbery and hooliganism and other similar crimes. Sir Hormusjee believes that that marvellous adaptability that the Parsees display is an inherited trait and this quality has helped them a great deal. The community though so small in number has retained its individuality and is the most wonderful example of survival in the history of the human race. In spite of reversals, adverse circumstances and being placed among people entirely different to them in custom, traditions, language, religion, history and race they have kept up their religion and remain a distinct and glorious entity among the millions of India. Sir Hormusjee is of opinion that if the Parsees of today want to uphold that prominent position in the public life of India which they have hitherto occupied they should change right lines. These changes must be progressive, well-thought out and suited to the changing India of today. While adjusting themselves to this century and changing conditions they must retain what is vital in the old. In any case they must stand by their religion and in spite of vicissitudes and troubles maintain the spirit of Zoroastrianism. At the same time being patriotic and rendering service to their country they should not isolate themselves from the Hindus nor from

Indian politics but living in harmony with their sister communities work for the welfare, happiness and well-being of their adopted country.

It is very necessary that they study their ancient scriptures so full of highly philosophical precepts, fashion their lives according to these principles and continue in their daily religious practices. These things according to Sir Hormusjee will greatly benefit the community. These things he considers were responsible for the glory of old Iran and if they were revived the Parsees would regain their old status. So also should the things of the spirit be stressed and less importance paid to outward show. Today the community has a whole adopted Western costume, and have carried this to an excess inasmuch as (the younger generation especially) they only use their own whenever they have to attend a wedding, a funeral or the fire temple. When they first came to India they adopted the Hindu dress but have now turned their eyes towards Europe with the result that they are not favourably looked upon by other Indian communities. It cannot be supposed that progressive and cultured Parsees wish to impress others by their clothes. After all a real sense of values does not take note of these outside accidents and it is in the long run the fundamental virtues by which a man may be judged. It is therefore extremely advisable that they should not depart from the simplicity of their ancestors especially if they are to retain the respect of the other communities in India. They

occupy a very prominent position in this country and at whatever cost to themselves they should endeavour to maintain it. The beginning of the 20th century marked the passing of the *jama-pichhodi* the ancestral costume which Parsees wore at every ceremonial occasion. Sir Hormusjee however still wears it and it is a pleasure to see him in this picturesque garb of his ancestors. When he welcomed His Majesty, the late King George V at Aden he was dressed in these clothes and this as well as his bearing and gracious manners made a very good impression on their Majesties.

For keeping up the prestige of the community it is necessary for them to retain names which are their own. Some of them take on English names and that is a great mirfortune for which mainly parents are responsible. A person's greatness is seen in his patience, his generosity his respect towards others, his beliefs, his fortitude in suffering but not in names. The English whom the Parsees rightly admire so much are a very conservative people and are very keen about maintaining their traditions in the letter and in the spirit. They should take a leaf out of the Englishman's book because that is the only way they will be able to keep for themselves their past glory. They should encourage individuality, cultivate an attitude of mind which is distinctly Zoroastrian and not *pseudo* English, cultivate, too an international attitude which while taking stock of the nations of the world does away with intercommunal prejudices and aversions.

Sir Hormusjee's views on the question of Gujarati as the language of his people are very illuminating. The Parsees came to India 1300 years ago and mostly settled in the villages and hamlets of Gujarat, learning to speak the language of the natives fluently. In course of time they began to write in it and produced novelists, dramatists, poets, journalists and writers of note. They encouraged and enriched Gujarati literature bringing to it the imaginative richness of a race which had for its heritage some of the greatest epics of all time. They infused into it a new force, a new mode of thinking, a new vitality which had been absent and contributed elements which were forceful and had a beauty of their own. Unfortunately, the position today has altered considerably. Except for Khabardar, the greatest living poet in Gujarati literature and a few others the average Parsee in the process of being Westernized does not know to write or speak decent Gujarati having taken to English wholesale at home and in his business. They are as a rule good at languages and have mastered many difficult classical tongues with ease. It therefore seems incomprehensible that they should have lost their grip over their own mother tongue. The Gujarati that is spoken and written by them is harsh, impure, ungrammatical: a mixture of Gujarati, Persian and English and if they wish to retain their communal solidarity it is necessary that they should pay more attention to their language.

As poet Khabardar says language is God's best gift to humanity. Through it a man can raise him-

self to the highest intellectual levels. Without it a man cannot express those high ideals and noble enthusiasms of which he is capable. One feels that Parsees while learning English should also study Gujarati and Persian the language of their forefathers. In Gujarati they might use words of Persian and Arabic origin, words suited to their own national tradition and usage so that Parsee Gujarati may be a distinct language. They may even help to evolve a national tongue and from thence a national culture. They may achieve something that is peculiarly their own, something that inherently belongs to them and to them alone. Parsee Gujarati which at present is the subject of so many jokes would disappear. The study of their own tongue would give them a more national bias and help to cement happier relations between them and the people of this country. Similarity of language, ideals and culture is always a unifying force and creates harmony as nothing else does. The spread of an Indian tongue among Parsees would help them to face all national problems for the benefit of all communities. Sir Hormusjee agrees with poet Khabardar that Parsee Gujarati today is not only ungrammatical and harsh but does not at all resemble the language spoken by cultured Gujarati men and women. He would like to see an improvement in this direction. In all forms of art too it is the West which dominates and Western music and dancing predominate among the Parsees of today. A generation ago the tendency was towards national art and it is unfortunate

that it has now swerved completely in the direction of Europe. This attitude is to say the least, short-sighted and unpolitic not to say disastrous. Sir Hormusjee is of opinion that all this should be changed, that Parsees should buy *Swadeshi* goods, adopt Indian music which has such wonderful *ragas* and *raginis* which they could adapt for religious purposes, and take to Indian literature which is so vast and edifying. Although by no means narrow Sir Hormusjee thinks that his community could with great advantage to themselves become Indianised and should co-operate as far as possible with other nationalities in India.

Recently several journalistic ventures have been set afoot but they have been more or less of the mushroom order and have disappeared after a very brief existence. The object of these ventures was stated to be the uplift of the community but actually the reverse was the case. Sir Hormusjee feels very strongly about this and is of opinion that a single well-conducted journal run by writers conscious of their responsibility would do much more good than a dozen ill-conceived attempts which peter out.

A section of the community have often expressed a desire for a Parsee Public School and University where special attention would be paid to Zoroastrian teachings, Parsee history and where a study of Persian language would be made compulsory in order to give students a correct knowledge of their back-ground and traditions. Sir Hormusjee is how-

ever opposed to this ideal as he rightly feels that such an institution would tend to emphasise differences between his co-religionists and other Indian nationalities. While maintaining their own religion he feels that they should generate elements common to both so that they might never be considered outsiders or foreigners by the people of this country. Parsees in the India of the future have nothing to fear. They are gifted with all those qualities necessary to make a success of life—girt, energy and tact. Their contribution in the past to the political life of the country has been supreme. Sir Hormusjee thinks that they should stand side by side fighting the country's battles, suffering, striving for her greatness as it is through suffering alone that a man achieves anything worth having in life. They should therefore, whatever it might cost them not isolate themselves and although few in number cooperate with Hindus and Muhammadans for the common good—their merits will earn the reward they deserve even under the most difficult of circumstances.

There are two ways, he considers by which Parsees can attain communal unity. First, by observing festive occasions with ancient ceremonials and secondly by concentrating on the essence of their religion. These festal occasions are an important and essential part of the life of man. They bring people together, remind them of their ancient heritage and culture and help to create friendly feelings between different classes of the community.

The modern way of observing these feasts Sir Hormusjee greatly deplores and feels that it would be much better if they were not observed at all. The immense amount of expenditure on food, clothes, gaiety and revelry is often beyond the incomes of the revellers, the occasion is made an excuse for feasting and all its religious significance lies deserted. It is generally forgotten that these days were meant for something more serious than merry making; they have a profounder message than this and should be put to very good use. The day should be given to prayer and meditation, to formulating schemes for alleviating human sorrow and distress and should be spent in the worship of God and in expressing gratitude for His manifold blessings.

These days often play an important part in welding closer the bonds of communal unity. But it is essential that every individual should understand and be attracted to what is known as the essence of religion. This is an important factor in its promotion. Prof. Pheroze Davar once said: "The Jews than whom there is no more ill-treated nation scattered in all parts of the world are still deeply religious and have a great affection for Jerusalem. They believe with conviction that a Jewish Empire will come into existence and they believe with equal fervour in the coming of Messiah. This scattered nation has a solidarity which is remarkable and this has been achieved by their love for Jerusalem. Every individual Jew turns to Jerusalem as the Mecca of his

dreams. Every Mussalman wherever he may be considers his life well-spent if he has been enabled to visit Mecca once during that period, and saves all his life in order to get there. Hindus in their old age go on pilgrimages and consider it a great spiritual privilege if they encounter death in these places as there they can directly go to Heaven. Parsees in the same way wherever they are should turn their thoughts to *Iran Shah* the sacred fire temple of Udvada and visit it when possible, not only for the good of their souls but for their own unity. The Mecca of the Parsees is not England, their spiritual home is a little seaside village where the sacred fire is lodged and where thousands of Parsees have journeyed to achieve the desire to their hearts." Sir Hormusjee agrees fully with Prof. Davar's ideas. When every other community in India is taking stock of its strength, straining every nerve towards social, political and economic growth it argues a singular lack of foresight on the part of the Parsees not to unite so that they may keep abreast of the nations who are striving for supremacy in the new India which is being regenerated in all aspects of life today.

Referring to fire-worship on which Zoroastrianism is partly based Sir Hormusjee says the reason for this is that fire is an element which has remarkable powers. Hindus also worship fire. It is an element which purifies while it burns and just as its flames reach Heaven so its worship tends to lead one to great heights; it seems to dominate the known and the unknown. The ancestors of



Sir Hormusjee, the Princess of Berar and her Secretary
at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute.

modern Zoroastrians were fully conscious of the greatness of this element and of its indispensability in life. Realising this they used fire in all important ceremonials. In the history of Iran several *Dasturs* have given their lives to defend it and the Zoroastrians of old left their native land and everything they held dear that it may not be desecrated. The Parsees still hold it in reverence and though to others it is merely an element it is to them a power which can not only see and hear but can carry heavenwards a silent prayer. The Zoroastrian holds it dearer than his life.

We feel that as long as the Parsees remain attached to their ancient religion so long will their greatness and supremacy continue and so long will they be enabled to maintain that large-heartedness and nobility of spirit which distinguishes almost every individual member of their community. Sir Hormusjee has great hopes for the future of the *Mobed* Section in the community. He does not agree that they are decadent and feels it is members of that class like Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Dinshaw Mulla, Sir Phiroze Sethna and others who have brought the community to the forefront. The *Mobeds* approximate among the Parsees to *Brahmins* among Hindus and the *Mullans* among Muhammedans. Many of them are *savants*; they display the traditional Iranian culture and are extremely religious and worthy of respect. This, Sir Hormusjee thinks should be accorded to them by every Zoroastrian as the *Mobeds* display a certain physical vigour and mental balance which other

Parsees lack. The Cama Athornan Institute for which the late Seth Manucherji Cama devoted twenty-five lakhs of rupees has been started in order to raise the status, cultural and social level of the *Mobeds.* Here little boys are given a sound religious and secular training, so that they may grow into priests who have an ideal of social service and who exhibit that devotion to duty which the pastors of the English church display. The Parsees sorely lack spiritual guidance and the Institute aims at turning out priests who will be capable of administering spiritual comfort and who can show the path to true religion. Thereby it is hoped to check the love of ease and comfortable living which has grown up among them and to which some of them have fallen a prey. It is Sir Hormusjee's earnest desire that in the future the *Mobeds* should continue to exhibit that care and love for their religion which they have always displayed especially as its principles are so worthy of admiration.

Sir Hormusjee has the greatest respect and admiration for the British character. He admires their commercial integrity, their courage, their political sagacity all of which he has experienced at first hand. He believes that as long as England remains English in the best and truest sense of that term nothing can ever happen to her. It is only when she tries to incorporate foreign ideals of conduct and gives up all those qualities which are native to her genius that she courts defeat. He feels that a nation in order to be great should base its actions on its own past history, its own social

ideals, literature, culture and religion, and gather strength from them. Sir Hormusjee considers the Englishman prudent and foreseeing. In every field of activity science, philosophy, politics, religion he has made a name for himself and contributed more than his quota to world civilisation. In his every-day life the Englishman shows a rare sense of humour and has a carefree and come-what-may attitude to things. When he is reminded of danger he minimises its gravity but face to face with it he gathers all his forces and does not rest till he has gained mastery of the entire situation. He comes out with flyinng colours and the world looks on and wonders at his achievement. He exhibits his best qualities in a crisis and it is this which has enabled him a member of a numerically insignificant nation to build up a vast Empire and rule over millions of human beings. By nature the Englishman is kind, he has a spirit of adventure, energy and a love of peace, and whatever differences may divide him ordinarily from his fellow-nationals he rallies to the country's cause and sinks them for the common good. Sir Hormusjee particularly admires the Englishman's sense of humour. "He is as humourous" says Sir Hormusjee "as he is hopeful." Humour is his greatest asset. This enables him to preserve his balance which is so essential for sane living. In fact one might say that it is indispensable and a nation which has this blessed gift need not have very much more. The man who can laugh is happy and healthy for he is not prone to exaggerate his troubles. He can face them

calmly, even laugh at them and Dame Fortune has a way of smiling on people who know how to smile. Another great quality which the Englishman displays is his sense of justice. In whatever part of the world he may be he strives hard to retain the prestige of his nation: he exercises marvellous self-control: he faces all difficulties, maintains a cheerful exterior. No other nation in the world has such a marvellous sense of humour, such fair-mindedness and devotion to duty. Sir Hormusjee considers that we Indians have much to learn from them. They are a people whose greatness consists in the character of the individual.

Sir Hormusjee is very enthusiastic about maintaining contacts with Iran. Opinion among other members of the community as regards emigration to Persia is divided some considering it fantastic and others impractical. Sir Hormusjee has always been drawn to the country from childhood upwards "that country which is as beautiful as Paradise" and which has captivated his imagination to a powerful extent. He feels that modern Parsees should make every attempt to keep in touch with every aspect of Iranian culture and progress and feels sure from the welcome he himself received from Reza Shah Pahlavi and the Iranians as a whole that they would be very well treated if circumstances should warrant their settlement in Iran.

Sir Hormusjee considers the ideals of the Zoroastrian religion to be pure and noble as well as practical of achievement and the fact that for the

last 1,300 years in spite of several vicissitudes it has been maintained among an alien people is a great factor to its credit. Nature itself has helped in the struggle. The beautiful fire-temple at Udwada with the sacred fire burning continuously since the day the Parsees landed in India 1,200 years ago is the symbol of love of purity and an intellectual spiritual radiance. It teaches them to lead pure lives and to aim at high ideals. It has been the emblem of a great civilisation whose art and culture were the envy of the world. Speaking about Modern Iran Sir Mirza Ismail once said: "Iranian art, Iranian literature, Iranian landscape and Iranian character have always held an irresistible fascination for the art lover, the scholar and the traveller..... Like Modern Turkey, Iran is to-day in the throes of a great industrial revolution and spiritual renaissance. The social emancipation of women, the spread of education, the extension of medical aid, the introductions of this great national revival, are the characteristics of the new spirit that is abroad in Iran. Not the least remarkable features of this revival are the gradual disappearance of religious obscurantism, the new found appreciation of the glories of Iran's past and the feeling of nationalism following in the wake of the break up of the tribal organisations. Iranian nationalism has now become a vital and constructive force." The Iranians are coming into their own again and their ancient emblem the fire is still worshipped in remote fishing villages in India.

It is unfortunate that this generation displays

a curious lack of interest in religion which after all is said and done has always proved the bedrock of human happiness. Their ancestors considered religion of such importance that they were ready to face all difficulties and hardships for its sake. The generations which came after these stalwart men kept up their religious practices and we see that they were prosperous, contented, self-respecting and in the forefront in all things in India. "Altruism" as Sir James Barrie once said "is enlightened self-interest" and religion and goodness have always paved the way to peace and happiness. Referring to conditions in Europe the Pope observed recently that all the unrest, the nervous tension, the insecurity one saw all around could be traced to lack of religion and of the spiritual consciousness.

Although Sir Hormusjee believes in and practices the brotherhood of man he does not favour intermarriages nor does he approve of women going on the stage which he considers the root of all evil. He is however an ardent feminist in so far as higher education for women and equal rights for the sex in all political and social matters is concerned.

He is also greatly attracted by the doctrine of *Swadeshi* which is so essential for India's economic well-being. It is wellknown that ours is one of the poorest countries in the world and that people have neither enough to eat nor wear. To end this condition *Swadeshism* is essential and in fact is the only sure remedy. In Gandhiji's method for im-

proving the economic and social welfare of India Sir Hormusjee has complete confidence. He believes that India is really fortunate in having at this juncture a selfless patriot like the Mahatma at the helm of affairs. In all the civilised countries of the world *Swadeshism* has meant national prosperity. Turkey and Iran have also adopted it and if the Parsees help it along it will be to the mutual benefit of themselves and the country. Sir Hormusjee has a large circle of friends as cosmopolitan as his charities, and these he owes to his stainless character, his simplicity, his cheerful attitude to life, his generosity and his tact in dealing with men and matters. His popularity in the community is great and so is it among a large circle of distinguished Muslims, Hindus, Europeans and rulers of Native States.

He is very moderate in his diet, and finds vegetarian food more wholesome and suited to his constitution. His interests are extremely varied and include science, botany, public health, floriculture, Parsi history, religion, physical culture and everything relating to the well-being of the community.

The house in which he was born he regards with particular affection. It is situated in a small lane near the Wadiaji Fire Temple and he takes great pleasure in visiting it once a year. He has a great respect and affection for the members of the sister-communities and helps them whenever he can.

He possesses extensive lands and estates in Zanzibar, Mombasa, Daressalaam, Hodeida, Aden, Bombay, Udvada, Mahableshwar, Bangalore and Lonavla. He is in the habit of examining every detail that comes within his purview and admires the qualities displayed by the older generation of his own community. He is most emphatic in his opinion that present day Parsees should give up all frivolity, turn their attention to religion and other serious questions, should devote themselves to social service and sacrifice their own interests to the general good. They should be more active in politics and commerce and take to manual labour and be proud of the wealth they acquire than the money they inherit. He feels that financial prosperity is on the wane amongst the Parsees and that their standard of living should not be too high in order that the domestic budget might be made to balance easily. Their status in the industrial world is also on the decline and Sir Hormusjee feels that the Parsee youths should strive hard to achieve their former glory. *Dayalbagh* scheme should serve as a model for the community. In this the organisers have started from small beginnings and have ended up by making it a large industrial concern. Journalists should co-operate in this as well as other Parsee associations and unite into a corporate whole for the common good. The one defect in the community is its extreme individualistic tendencies. If these can be sunk and co-operation obtained on all hands there is no doubt that the Parsees with their grit and honesty will achieve far greater things than they have hitherto done.

Sir Hormusjee and His Family



Standing : Miss Manekbai F. H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Alanmai F. H. C. Dinshaw, Miss Makki N. H. C. Dinshaw
Sitting : Mr. Dinshawji H. C. Dinshaw, Behen Alanmai, Sir Hormusjee, Mrs. Frenibai N. C. Dinshaw, Mr. Nusserwanji H. C. Dinshaw,
Sitting on the ground: Master Cowasjee N. H. C. Dinshaw

CHAPTER X

Sir Hormusjee's Family

SIR HORMUSJEE is fortunate in many respects: health, wealth, progeny, longevity and a glorious life. Providence itself has wonderfully helped him in his self-exertions to achieve and attain all these.

Today at the ripe old age of 83, Sir Hormusjee looks cheerful, enthusiastic, healthy and hopeful. His family life is happy, contented, peaceful and prosperous; culture, civility, simplicity and hospitality pervade his entire being. Sir Hormusjee is a staunch supporter of the joint-family system. Being himself a *pater familias* he is an ideal father, a faithful husband, a loving brother, a sympathetic friend, and a true Zoroastrian gentleman with a pure heart.

Sir Hormusjee was married before he proceeded to England for higher education. His wife Manekbai was simple, religious, humble and devoid of any pomp. Her temper was mild, cheerful, and her nature kind, generous, philanthropic and unassuming. She had a large sympathy for poor Zoroastrian families and was the guide, philosopher and friend to many an indigent soul. Many of Sir Hormusjee's large and far-reaching charities were

in a large measure due to her advice and inspiration. She played a very prominent and important part in her husband's manifold activities.

On the 12th of October 1915 A.D. Manekbai of revered memory, was gathered to her fathers. Hence she did not live to enjoy the highest title of 'Lady' attached to her name. And yet she is remembered by the Parsees on account of an ideal life, passed by her in plain living and philanthropic actions. Only a short time before Manekbai's demise, Hormusjee had gone to Aden. The unexpected death of his beloved consort caused intense, unbearable pain and distress to this great leader. But being wise and contemplative, Hormusjee quietly submitted to God's will. He bore his sorrow with patience and fortitude, and gave succour to his sons, daughter and grand-children. After the passing away of one who made her husband's life-path brilliant for years, who actively participated in her husband's charitable work, who was a true partner in life, and a real friend, philosopher and guide, Sir Hormusjee's erstwhile optimistic, energetic and cheerful life is tinged with a little note of pessimism and sorrow. But that is inevitable. During her lifetime, whenever Manekbai recovered from any serious illness, Sir Hormusjee donated handsome sums in charity by way of thanksgiving to the Almighty Creator. Rs. 12,000 were on the spot collected during the *Uthamna* ceremony of Manekbai. The entire amount was entrusted to the Parsee *Anjuman* of Aden. From the proceeds of this sum



Bai Manekbai Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw

Died 1915

help is given every year to hospitals, schools and other institutions in Aden.

Manekbai proved a model housewife. She devoted herself with more than ordinary success to the management of her home and the careful upbringing of her children. In private life she had offered a shining example of wifehood and motherhood and in public life had established a standard of religious conduct and philanthropy to which all might with advantage aspire. Her exemplary devotion as wife and mother is rightly regarded as one of the most important factors in the successful career of Sir Hormusjee, and lives in the memory of her children, grand-children and descendants. Manekbai has left behind her three sons, Framroz, Dinshawji and Nusserwanji, and one daughter Alanmai.

Sir Hormusjee's eldest son Framroz was born in Bombay in July 1885 A.D. He received his primary and secondary education at the Fort High School, Bombay. At the age of 15 in 1900 Mr. Framroz was sent to England for higher studies. For six years he was a student at Brighton College. Later he studied Shipping and Navigation for six months in the firm of Messrs. Gray Dawes and Company, and side by side he at the suggestion of his illustrious father, commenced taking lessons in Italian language at a Commercial College as there was great need of assistants in the firm at Aden, who can speak in Italian language. After getting sufficient experience in Messrs. Gray Dawes

& Co. Mr. Framroz received intimation from Sir Hormusjee to the effect that he should travel round Europe, then go to Italy and prosecute his studies in Italian language there for a further period of six months. Instead of wasting his time in seeing the principal cities of Europe, Mr. Framroz went straight to Italy and there got a good command over Italian language. Thereafter he expressed his desire to tour the Continent; but it was not fulfilled.

In his youth Sir Hormusjee had remained for only two years in Europe. Taking into consideration the changing time, circumstance and environment, he allowed his eldest son to remain in Europe for full seven years so that the youth might imbibe in full, ideal knowledge about European civilisation, European culture, European manners, etiquette and mode of living. Thus Sir Hormusjee has given a larger share in the shaping of the character and the development of intellect of his eldest son by giving him greater opportunities than he himself had received. Mr. Framroz has made the best use of these opportunities and has given and is still giving the benefit of them to his venerable father, to his firm and to the public at large. Like his father Sir Hormusjee has given commercial and business training to his children, because he from his own experience believes firmly in the utility of such training with the march of times.

After spending six years in Europe in gaining enough experience and in imbibing the excellent principles and elements of Western Culture,



Seth Framroz Hormusjee C. Dinshaw,
the eldest son of Sir Hormusjee Cawasji.

Mr. Framroz returned in March 1907 and joined immediately the well-known firm of his father. At the suggestion of Sir Hormusjee, he got first hand knowledge, as an assistant in the firm, for full one year of all the commercial, and shipping procedure and transactions carried on by the firm. After one year's stay at the firm, he was transferred to the old firm at Crater, Aden and placed in full charge of its business. Here he faithfully performed his duties with zeal and ardour; and enhanced the prestige of his renowned firm by winning over the confidence of Indian and non-Indian commercial concerns.

In 1913, Mr. Framroz was put at the helm of affairs at the Zanzibar firm. On his return from that place, he was given charge of the Bombay Branch of the firm. He has loyally preserved the traditional hospitality of his father and grand-father, at Aden. Many eminent men have been accorded right royal welcome by him. In 1920 he was appointed the Trustee of the Aden Port by Government, and he held this honoured distinction for three years. He was for the second time appointed to the Trusteeship of the Port of Aden, in 1923. Later on in the same year he travelled round India, saw its chief cities and towns, and returned in July 1924 to Aden. For the third time he was appointed a Trustee of the Port of Aden during this year. In 1926 he toured round Europe; and after visiting the principal countries on the Continent returned to Aden and took over the administration of the firm. Once again in 1927,

he was for the fourth time appointed to the Trusteeship of the Port of Aden. Since then he has been continuously appointed to this honoured post.

At the principal offices at Aden, and in different branches of the firm, Mr. Framroz has achieved very satisfactory work. By his good qualities, cheerful temper and integrity of purpose he won over the confidence of the cosmopolitan populace of Aden as well as of the commercial bodies there; and has enhanced the glory of the Adenwalla family. He has followed in the footsteps of his father and grand-father, and has contributed large sums of money in cosmopolitan charities. By taking a leading part in the various civic affairs of Aden, he has made a deep impression as a sympathetic leader of his community. Charity is a special characteristic of the Adenwalla family, and it is a matter of satisfaction and pride that this characteristic quality has descended in Sir Hormusjee's eldest son in a large measure. Today in Aden, he extends a helping hand in the name of his firm for every righteous cause.

In aid of the Nursing Association of Aden, Mr. Framroz had several charity plays enacted with the help of Parsee amateurs of his firm. He added his own mite to the proceeds of these plays, and a handsome amount of Rs. 7,000 was presented to the Association. He also helped to a great extent the 'Saint Dunstan's Home for Blind.' When in 1927 Gujarat, Kathiawar and Cutch were afflicted with dire disaster due to heavy floods, an influen-

tial meeting of prominent citizens of Aden was held there under the Chairmanship of Mr. Framroz to send Aden's share towards the 'Famine Relief Fund.' He gave a graphic description of the great calamity caused by the floods befalling the peoples of Gujarat, Kathiawar and Cutch, and donated Rs. 1,000 on behalf of his firm. He had given his prominent share in raising the fund to a decent figure of Rs. 17,000. Since then his fountain of charity has flown steadily and quietly. In his charities there is no distinction of caste, creed or religion.

In all the public activities of Aden, Mr. Framroz has co-operated whole-heartedly. The helm of his firm at Aden is in his hands; and under his kind vigilance the faithful and enthusiastic assistants of his firm are performing their duties satisfactorily. He is the leader of the Parsee community at Aden. After Sir Hormusjee, it has fallen to the lot of his eldest son to shoulder important duties and responsibilities at Aden. All these duties he is performing satisfactorily. He is widely known as a worthy son of a worthy father. He had gone to England in 1937 on the occasion of the Coronation of King George VI. After returning to Aden, he is again occupied in his commercial life.

Mr. Framroz was married at Bombay in 1915 to Bai Piroja, daughter of Mr. Ardeshir Behramji Cooper, a leading citizen of Lahore. Within a short period of seven years after marriage, this philanthropic lady died at Aden after a short illness in

1922 at the young age of 32. In spite of being the daughter of a wealthy father, in spite of being the eldest daughter-in-law of a millionaire merchant, Bai Piroja had no pride or vanity in her heart. Hardly a year had passed since she went to Aden, she had won the esteem and affection of all who came in contact with her by her frank and cheerful nature. She mixed amongst the rich as well as the poor with equal feeling. She had a great faith for her holy religion. In her demise Mr. Framroz has lost an ideal wife. Rs. 5,200 were given in charity at Aden on the *Uthamna* ceremony of the deceased. Bai Piroja has left behind her two cultured daughters, Manekbai and Alanmai. Both these intellectual, accomplished and good natured sisters are today a source of great inspiration to Sir Hormusjee in his green old age. Mr. Framroz lives at Aden, whilst both these young sisters are living in Bombay with their grand-father, and prosecuting their studies.

Sir Hormusjee's second son Mr. Dinshawji was born at Aden in September 1887. Like his elder brother he received his primary and secondary education at the Fort High School, Bombay. He, too, was sent by Sir Hormusjee to England in 1901 for higher studies. In company with his elder brother he joined the Brighton College, London, where he studied for five years. During this period he worked at Messrs. Gray Dawes & Company to get knowledge and experience of shipping. In 1905 he went to Paris, and studied French language there. Like his revered father he holds a good command over



Seth Dinshawji Hormusjee,
Son of Sir Hormusjee

this language. In 1906 he went to Germany and studied German language.

In 1907 Mr. Dinshawji returned from Europe and joined his father's firm. He was given charge of the Berbera branch of the firm, in 1909. The administration of the firm's branch at Hodeida was handed over to him in 1910. During the year 1911-12 he evinced keen interest in the firm at Camp Aden, and satisfactorily performed his duties. In 1912 he was entrusted with the work of controlling the work of the firm's branch at Zanzibar. For a second time during 1913-14, he was placed at the helm of the firm's offices at Hodeida. In 1916-17 he got first hand practical textile knowledge, in the Burhanpur Tapti Mills at Burhanpur, Central Provinces. He worked in the firm at Aden in 1917-18. Having thus become proficient by acquiring knowledge and experience of every branch of his father's business he was given charge of the administration of the firm at Aden in 1919. Here he controlled the business very satisfactorily with his elder brother. Sir Hormusjee is indeed very pleased and satisfied with the way his sons manage their business.

In 1923 Mr. Dinshawji travelled throughout Egypt and Europe and returned to Aden via Italy. During his tour in Europe he visited Italy, England, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria etc. and saw the capitals and principal cities and towns of these countries.

In 1925, Mr. Dinshawji went to 'Hodeida', from where he proceeded to 'Saana' capital of Yemen. He experienced intense trouble and innumerable difficulties in the journey from Hodeida to Saana. In a letter written by him to his relatives he has given in a witty, humorous style of romantic and touching description of the ground, natural scenery, of his visit with the Imam of Yemen, as also of the rough roads, dangerous ascents and descents on the way, travelling on mules and of sleepless, troublesome and horrible nights.

In the course of his letter Mr. Dinshawji wrote:

> "My mule had a slightly broken Arab saddle and no stirrups. We had to travel the first part of the journey through sand. After continuous march, I and all the party were so stiff that we just managed to crawl along to the *charpois*, which were provided in the open for the comfort of travellers. Luckily there was a masseur in the place and he was massaging in turns the three of us, which gave us great relief from the stiffness.
>
> "I could eat nothing but took a cup of tea and went to sleep soundly.
>
> "At 2 A.M. we were again up and after drinking *Gisher* (Coffee husk drink) we re-started our journey and reached Bajel on the 26th dead tired. My Arab friend took us to an Arab gentleman who placed a hut at our disposal. The hut was so dark and warm that it was impossible to sleep in it, so we had the *charpois* brought out and tried to sleep under the shade of the tree, but the place was so

full of flees that it was a question whether we would be able to sleep. However, we did manage to get broken sleep. We did not travel during the day, as the sun was very hot and it was impossible to travel during the day.

"We started again on our journey as an Arab Officer of the Imam's army had joined us. It was 10-30 P.M. on the 26th we went down a rivulet to cross, but the Arab Officer knowing the road, got his servant to light a hurricane lantern and by its light went down the incline, but we seeing the light ahead of us disappearing round a bend, and we being total strangers had to grope in the dark over rough stones down an incline. I thought it more prudent to get off the mule, I jumped off, but whilst trying to walk, I fell into a small hole about a foot deep, but luckily my syce came to my assistance, took hold of my arm and took me across to the other side of the rivulet. We had to cross another river bed and whilst going down the incline and having no stirrups, I twice got cramps in the stomach but managed to ease the pain by rubbing the stomach. At last, we reached a halting place called Obbal. I was thoroughly soaked with perspiration, and as my luggage mule had not arrived, I had to sleep on the *charpoy* by taking off my coat and covering myself with it on the *charpoy* so that it may have a chance to dry. We started again on the 27th and arrived at a place called Hudjelah. We started on our journey but heavy clouds were gathering. After we had proceeded about a mile, the rain came down in torrents and I was thoroughly soaked. We reached a halting place called Ousil. We had to pass the night sleeping on the ground but we had to scratch the whole night as it was full of flees.

"On the 27th after drinking *Gisher* we restarted and arrived at Menakha. The temperature at Menakha is moderate but the peculiar thing about Menakha is that at 4 P.M. daily, the clouds begin to rise from the valley, and it is supposed to be the same all through the year and one does not see many people in the street after 4 P.M.

"On the 30th we re-started and arrived at Suk-el-Khamis (Thursday Bazaar) at 4-30 P.M. We took dinner at 8 P.M. This place is well known for its famous flees. Sleep was impossible. One of my friends had brought a sort of large cotton sack to sleep inside same, so that the flees would not get inside them, but evidently he must have found it rather suffocating, as after a short time he fairly jumped out of the bag. We decided to move on at night and sent for our muleteer. He arrived, and we ordered him to get the animals ready as we could get no sleep and wanted to move on, he replied it was impossible, as night was dark and we were on the mountains. He suggested we should sleep on the roof of our room. We tried and slept soundly till 5 A.M. We re-started at 5-30 A.M. and reached Saana at 7-15 P.M. on the 31st August.

"The city of Saana boasts of 9 gates, viz. (1) Bab-el-Youdh by which you generally enter Sanna from Hodeidah side; (2) Bab-el-Balga; (3) Bab-el-Yemen; (4) Bab-el-Citran; (5) Bab-el-Khuyema; (6) Bab-el-Shaoob; (7) Bab-el-Saba; (8) Bab-el-Sujadith and (9) Bab-el-Room. Fortifications surround the city of Saana, and I believe the thickness of the walls are about 10 feet. There is one peculiarity that all the gates are closed at 6 P.M. with the exception of one which is Bab-el-Youdh, which only closes at 7 P.M.

"One day we had the misfortune to take a walk just outside the fortification, and went from Bab-el-Youdh to another gate, and it was just on 6 P.M., but the guards would not permit us to enter asking where we had come from. We replied we came out of one gate and are entering by another to which a reply was given, "We don't know you, and we cannot allow you to enter." Luckily there was among the guards, one who must have seen us and told the others, he knew us, and it was alright, otherwise we would have been in a sorry plight.

"There was nothing doing in Saana, and the time was hanging heavily; no music is allowed to be played except on Fridays at about 1 P.M. The Imam after his return from the mosque, sits on the top story of the main gate to his palace, and takes a review of his troops with two bands playing, and troops marching past with guns etc. That is the only diversion of the week. There is no such thing as sanitation and the streets are narrow and croocked except the main road, and some of the tumbled down buildings are left in the same state.

"There were Turkish and Persian Officers there, who it appeared, led a very lazy life. Once I asked one of the Persian Officers as to how they cared to lead such a monotonous dull life, cut off from the world with no newspapers nor daily telegrams, and he replied, "Oh we are quite happy and contented, we do not worry about the world."

"We met the Imam sitting on the carpet with four of his officials on either side of him. He seemed a very simple man with no love for luxuries and rather darkish brown in colour. He was reading the petition from his subjects, which is supposed to take up most of his time. He had a very pleasant

smiling face. As we went into a sort of an open sitting room, generally known as the Mafraj, the others kissed his hand and knee and I had to pretend to kiss his hand. He welcomed us, and asked how we had journeyed etc; and in about ten minutes our audience was finished.

"One day I went again to see the Imam at a special audience at Rodah with a friend in the courtyard of his house there, and he took his seat on a chair, and requested us to be seated. I was wondering where to sit down as there were no chairs nor carpets, so I followed my friend and sat on the haunches. I had hardly been sitted 5 minutes like that, when I jumped up and stood not being accustomed to sit on haunches for a long time."

Mr. Dinshawji takes, like his elder brother, a very keen interest in the public life of Aden. In 1923 he was for the first time appointed a Trustee of the Port of Aden; and during his elder brother's absence he is usually appointed as a Trustee. Besides, he is a useful and responsible member of the Executive Committee of Aden Settlement. He has rendered valuable services as Honorary Secretary of the Parsee *Panchayet* at Aden. He is playing a very active and energetic part in the public life of Aden. In this respect he has truly followed in the footsteps of his grand-father, father and elder brother.

Mr. Dinshawji is very enlightened, unassuming, modest, shy and ultra-modern in his outlook on life. He is very well-read, cultured and is a good conversationalist and a good anecdotist. He is very fond of music: Eastern as well as Western.



Seth Dinshawji Hormusjee,
Son of Sir Hormusjee

He speaks English as well as French fluently. Like Sir Hormusjee Mr. Dinshawji is simplicity incarnate. He believes firmly in plain living and high thinking. He possesses a wonderful sense of humour, a critical sense of independence, is a shrewd judge of human nature and has a sympathetic outlook on life. Like his father he is also charitable but his charities are inspired more by reason and intellect than by impulse. He is a staunch Zoroastrian and is very fond of knowing new things. He is very outspoken in expressing his views.

Mr. Dinshawji's hobby is gardening. He occasionally goes to pictures. He likes Indian pictures provided they are well acted. He is cool-headed and hardly loses his temper. He is a shrewd businessman and is very popular with merchants and members of his staff. In his young age Mr. Dinshawji was very fond of collecting photographs. He is also a good traveller and has gone round the whole world. He also went to London in 1935 to participate in the Jubilee Celebrations of His Majesty the late King George V. Mr. Dinshawji has also travelled extensively in Europe and Asia.

At present Mr. Dinshawji is staying at Bombay and looking exclusively after the management of the Burhanpur Tapti Mills. He visits Burhanpur occasionally and passes a simple, quiet and unostentatious life in the company of Sir Hormusjee and other members of his family. Mr. Dinshawji's personality is interesting and lovable. In short, he

is an ideal son, an affectionate father, a loving brother and a never-failing friend.

Mr. Dinshawji was married to Bai Meherbanu, daughter of Mr. Kaikobad. She has got one daughter named Jerbai, who has been married to Mr. Pudumji of Poona.

Sir Hormusjee's third son, Mr. Nusserwanji was born at Aden in December 1896. He took his primary and secondary education at the Parsee Boys' High School at Panchgani. Thereafter he was educated in practical business training. Though he has not got the benefit of European education like his two elder brothers, he is a thorough gentleman, having very refined, practical and generous views and ideas.

Though Mr. Nusserwanji is a businessman and a merchant, he is specially fond of nature and its beauties. He has got an artistic mind and has an immense love for gardening, motoring and agriculture. He is also very fond of training birds and animals. He had once a beautiful collection of birds. His life is simple and religious. By nature he is cheerful, mild and social. In the Cowasjee Dinshaw family he alone keeps beard and thereby looks grand, dignified and sober.

Mr. Nusserwanji lives at Bombay and is of immense help to his venerable father in his green old age. With Sir Hormusjee, he attends important meetings, and functions. He accompanies his father



Miss Makki Nusserwanji H. C Dinshaw,
Grand daughter of Sir Hormusjee

on great occasions; and many a time, in the absence of his father, performs his duties. Sir Hormusjee was to unveil the bust of Mr. Muncherjee Joshi at Dadar, but due to several important engagements he could not come down from Mahableshwar. So the task of Sir Hormusjee was fully performed by Mr. Nusserwanjee and he did not let his father's absence felt by those assembled. Following in the footsteps of his father, he is scrupulously adhering to the virtuous principles of his elder. Sir Hormusjee cherishes very high hopes about his youngest son.

Mr. Nusserwanji was married to Bai Freni, daughter of Mr. Jehangir Rustomji Daji and has got two children, a son and a daughter. The daughter named Makki was born in February 1920. The son was born on 11th September 1926. Being born in the direct line of Seth Cawasji Dinshaw, he is named Cawasji. This son is the sole hope of Sir Hormusjee's geneological continuity. We wish and pray to God that He the Almighty may give long life to this auspicious-named child. May He make the child happy, prosperous, and fortunate! May the Child continue the traditions of the Adenwala family, and enhance the fame and glory of his father, grand-father, and great-grand-father! Mr. Nusserwanji's daughter Makki is enlghtened, accomplished and a good pianist. She is perfect at needlework, and like her father, is very fond of gardening, motoring and knowing new new things.

Sir Hormusjee's only daughter Alanmai was

born at Aden in 1893. Bai Alanmai is a sober, wise and worthy daughter of worthy parents. Sir Hormusjee and Bai Manekbai not only had her educated at home in domestic science and ordinary training, but sent her to England for higher and practical studies. At London she got a good command over English and acquired knowledge of useful and attractive elements of Western Civilisation.

Like her mother, Bai Alanmai is sympathetic and kind to the poor. She has travelled extensively throughout Europe and America, in company with her parents. She is a cultured, intellectual and refined personality; yet, like her father, she lives an ideal, plain and pious life.

Bai Alanmai was married at Bombay in 1917 to Mr. Edulji Hormusjee Saklatwala. But her good and loving husband Edulji passed away to the higher plane, leaving his relatives and wide circle of friends and admirers here in grief and sorrow. Since then Bai Alanmai's life has become lonely. Still, being wise and sagacious she has an unflinching faith in the Almighty Creator, quietly leads a benevolent and philanthropic life, and in a wonderful manner helps her venerable father in his old age. Today in the evening of his life, Sir Hormusjee is fortunate in receiving his daughter's aid. She is a true source of inspiration to him. She plays a very prominent part in all the public charities of her father, with whom she lives in Bombay; and leads a contented, plain, pious and model existence.



Behen Alanmai,
Daughter of Sir Hormusjee

The late Seth Cowasji had five sons. Of these three—Sir Hormusjee, Mr. Kaikobad and Mr. Sorabji are living. Sir Hormusjee has almost retired from his business owing to declining years, and his business responsibility has been shouldered by his younger brother Mr. Kaikobad, who carries it out fully to the satisfaction of his elder brother.

Mr. Kaikobad was born at Bombay on 21st April 1866. He is junior to Sir Hormusjee by nine years. He received his primary and secondary education at the Fort High School, Bombay, and passed the Matriculation Examination of the University of Bombay in 1886. He then joined the Elphinstone College for higher studies. At College he acquired a good mastery over the English language. In his student life, he had a great taste and love for mathematics. After having his fill of higher studies at the Elphinstone College, he joined the well-known firm of his father at Aden. Though he was not lucky to receive European education in his youth like Sir Hormusjee, he holds very liberal, enlightened and independent views of his own.

After having joined the firm at Aden, Mr. Kaikobad gradually revealed his business talent. In course of time he performed his duties satisfactorily in the offices of the firm's branches at Bombay, Hodeida, Zanzibar, etc. and has greatly enhanced the repute of his father's famous firm.

When Mr. Kaikobad was in charge of the Zanzibar branch office, the Boer war broke out.

So, in 1900 he opened a branch of the firm at Delgoabay, a colony of Portuguese Africa, in order to supply provisions to British Men-of-War. He had gone to Delgoabay with his wife Bai Khorshedbanu and his daughters, and taking advantage of this occasion he had travelled through South Africa.

Whilst in charge of the offices at Hodeida Mr. Kaikobad had become very popular amongst the Indian, Arab and Turkish merchants on account of his genial and humourous nature. He had intimate friendship at Hodeida, with high Turkish officials and even with the Governor. Often there was an interchange of dinner functions between him and the Governor.

Like Sir Hormusjee, Mr. Kaikobad has played a very prominent part in the civic life of Aden and Bombay. Taking into consideration his cosmopolitan services and charities, the British Government have made him a 'Justice of the Peace'. Besides he is an Honorary Presidency Magistrate and a Past Master of Freemasonry. He is a leading member of the Managing Committee of His Majesty's Training Ship "Dufferin". He is a delegate of the Parsee Chief Matrimonial Court, and is a prominent member of 'Zoroastrian Conference', of the Iran League, and of the *Fasli Sal* Society. Besides, he is a leading and useful member of the Committee of the 'Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau'. At one time he was Vice-President of The Western India Automobile Association. In addition to all these, Mr. Kaikobad has connection with many in-

dustrial, banking and charity concerns. He is a conspicuous figure in well-known clubs like 'Asian', 'Orient' and 'Willingdon', and in Masonic institutions and other public bodies. To crown all these activities, he takes a very enthusiastic and leading part in public commercial and business Associations.

Since he was made a partner in the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw & Brothers after the demise of his father, Mr. Kaikobad's public life commenced at Aden, and it continued for years together. Like his revered father and elder brother he, too, was for many years a Trustee of the Port of Aden and was well-known as a fearless and independent member of the Board of Trustees. In the prosperity of modern Aden, his share also is not insignificant. He has given the benefit of his services to the Parsee *Anjuman* of Aden, to the Aden Municipality, and to many other institutions at Aden. He has thus given ample evidence of his selfless life dedicated to the service of others. He is specially fond of travel. With his family he has travelled through important cities of Europe, Africa and India. In 1937, he travelled with his daughter Mrs. H. F. Mulla, through principal countries of Europe, and personally attended and saw the Coronation Service of King George VI.

In life, Mr. Kaikobad follows his elder brother. Like Sir Hormusjee, he is moderate in politics, and is loyal to the British Crown. He, too, has a soft corner in his heart for the British people, and he has a very high opinion about the integrity of Bri-

tish businessmen. He does not like publicity. Being free from vanity, he is shy of public applause; but on proper occasions, he too, like his elder brother heartily participates in grave questions affecting his community. In June 1899 was performed the opening ceremony of the *Daremeher*, that is Fire-Temple, built at Lonavla by his father in pious memory of his deceased mother Jerbai. At that time, after the installation of the Sacred Fire, Mr. Kaikobad fluently replied to the address presented to his father by the Lonavla *Anjuman*, in the presence of a distinguished gathering and the *Anjuman* assembled there. His oratory won the applause of the audience. He thus laid the foundation stone of a glorious public life and service to his community. Since that occasion whenever an opportunity is offered him to speak amidst meetings or associations he is well-known in the Parsee community for expressing experienced views and firm opinions.

In February 1928, Mr. Kaikobad gave an 'At Home' at his magnificent residence at Pedder Road, *Villa Ghita* mansion in honour of his guest Mr. Ardeshir Edulji Reporter, the well-known citizen of Iran. On this occasion Mr. Reporter gave learned discourse on "Iranism in New Iran". At its conclusion, Mr. Kaikobad, whilst thanking the audience, spoke as under in his characteristic style:

> "I thank you all for your presence to-day. These days Iran, and Iran alone is on the brain of the Parsees. Here in India, we have to do much

work, whereas Parsees now want to go to Iran. But we must be very careful lest we leap in the dark, and fall into the pit. Nowadays money is the chief thing required for every work. If we have money, then alone we can go a step forward. So, if Parsees are to go to Iran for business, the first requirement is money. You people expect every thing from the leaders of the Parsee Community at Bombay. But you must also stand on your own merits, and should give your own quota for Iran".

How realistic, frank and fearless is Mr. Kaikobad can be gathered from the above short and relevant extract from his address. This characteristic style of his is visible in all his utterances. This independent expression of his thoughts is alone the beauty and greatness of his being.

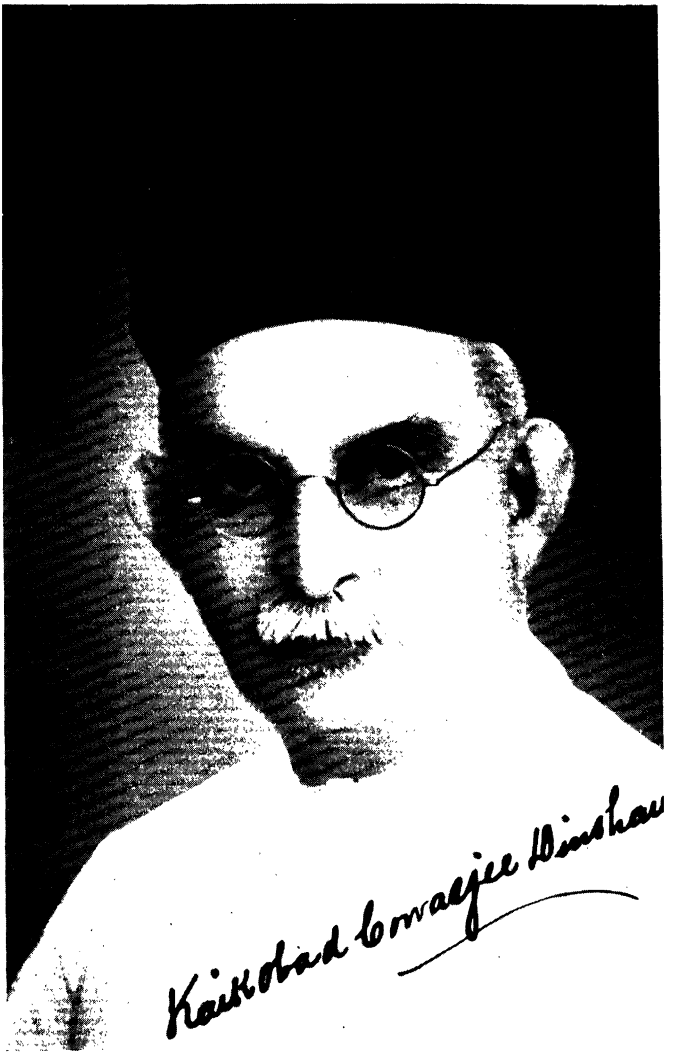
Today Mr. Kaikobad is 73 years old; and is well-known in his community and amongst other people, like Sir Hormusjee for independence of spirit, cosmopolitan charities, nobility of heart and public service. He is neither an extreme orthodox nor an extreme reformer. He is like a golden link between the old and the new schools of thought. On proper occasions, he expresses his views fearlessly caring neither for individuals nor for institutions.

Due to his genial, kind and sympathetic nature, Mr. Kaikobad has earned wide popularity. On account of his practical outlook, sound knowledge of business and a balanced mind he has gathered a large circle of friends, and holds great influence

even amongst officials. He does not crave for titles. He believes in simplicity, service and devotion to duty.

Whereas Sir Hormusjee is quiet, reserved and of a sober temperament, Mr. Kaikobad is witty, humorous and jolly. He is as much fearless in expressing his thoughts as he is independent. He believes in adopting oneself to new and changed environments. His charities are sound and public, and yet his munificence is inspired by reason and not by blind faith. In philonthropic activities he follows his elder brother; but whilst donating, he makes some appropriate witty remarks. His charities, too, know no distinctions of caste or creed; and are cosmopolitan and solid.

Mr. Kaikobad reads and patronises English, Persian and Gujarati literature. He is, besides, known for suggesting appropriate changes in religious, social and other thoughts and traditions. He shows his dislike for deeply-rooted wrong customs. Parsee religion and Parsee name are dearest to him. He is very enthusiastic and fond of Zoroastrian religious literature; and it is the writer's personal experience that he gives freely for that purpose. He has a wide circle of friends. He is an expert conversationalist; whilst narrating, he makes his hearers laugh and laugh till they get exhausted. Humour has permeated his every limb. But it is at its best when he is in company with his cotemporaries. Otherwise when discussing business pro-



Mr. Kaikobad Cowasjee Dinshaw,
Brother of Sir Hormusjee

blems or when conversing with well-known writers the sobriety observed by him is indeed remarkable.

Today Mr. Kaikobad attends his firm regularly, examines every minute detail of each department of the firm carefully, and conducts a thriving business, carrying on transactions worth millions of rupees. With the zest and zeal of a youth he travels in the country and abroad. He gives the benefit of his independent and liberal views to the Parsee community, and has firmly adhered to the traditions established by his father and elder brother.

Mr. Kaikobad was married on 8th January 1892 to Khorshedbanu, daughter of the well-known Parsee Citizen Mr. Hormusjee Edulji Davar. Bai Khorshedbanu is a cultured lady, having bold and independent views; and has travelled in company with her husband to Europe and Africa. She has three female issues—Meherbanu, Jerbai and Sheherbanu. Of these, the eldest daughter Meherbanu is married to Mr. Dinshawji, second son of Sir Hormusjee. Mr. Kaikobad's second daughter Bai Jerbai is married to Mr. Hormusjee F. Mulla, solicitor, younger brother of the late eminent lawyer Sir Dinshaw F. Mulla. Bai Sheherbanu, the third daughter of Mr. Kaikobad is married to Mr. Singara. Thus the family life of Mr. Kaikobad is happy and prosperous.

Sir Hormusjee's third brother is Mr. Sorabji. Today he is 68, and has been living a retired life for the past three years.

Mr. Sorabji received his primary and secondary education at Bombay. He then went to London and got experience of shipping at Messrs. Gray Dawes and Company. After returning from London he performed his duties satisfactorily at the principal offices of the firm at Aden, as well as its branches at Zanzibar, Hodeida etc.

Mr. Sorabji has played a very prominent part in the public life of Aden. Like his revered father and brothers, he has rendered useful service as a Trustee on the Board of Aden Port Trust. On many occasions he has worked as Honorary Secretary of the Parsee *Anjuman* of Aden.

Mr. Sorabji has travelled twice to Europe with his family. At Chowpatty, he has a large palatial mansion; and at present he lives a life of retirement in that magnificent bungalow. At Poona, too, he owns a bungalow.

As regards charity, Mr. Sorabji sticks to the hereditary traditions of the Adenwala family. He has donated a decent amount to the Dastur School at Poona; and even today the fountain of his charity flows quietly. He speaks little, and is quiet, sober and sagacious. He has a great taste for reading; and to-day in his retired life reading is his only true friend. He has some taste for Gujarati literature; but books written in pure Gujarati have no attraction for him, because he does not understand this language quite distinctly. And yet, he has feeling of respect and devotion like that of hero-

worship, to writers, religious preceptors, and cultured personalities; and he receives each of these with due welcome, and gives impress of his generosity and nobility of blood.

Mr. Sorabji was married to Bai Dhunmai, daughter of Mr. Dadabhai Merwanji Jijibhai. Out of this wedlock he has got two sons—Dorabji and Cowasji and two daughters, Banubai and Najanmai.

Mr. Sorabji's eldest son Dorabji served as an apprentice in a firm of Chartered Accountants in London. During the Great War of 1914-18 he joined the British Army, took part in the battle of Mons and thereby added fresh laurels to the glory of his illustrious family. He was married in 1925 to Bai Piroja, daughter of Mr. Merwanji Rustomji Boyce, the famous Barrister of Zanzibar. He has two children—one son another daughter. Mr. Sorabji's second son Cowasji was accidentally drowned, all of a sudden, whilst going to swim in the sea at Juhu, about nine years ago. Banubai, the elder daughter of Mr. Sorabji is married to Mr. Ardeshir Kuverji Bharucha; whilst her sister Najamai is as yet unmarried. Like his elders Mr. Sorabji, too, lives a plain and healthy life. Contentment is his chief motto.

Of the four brothers of Sir Hormusjee, two—Mr. Kaikobad and Mr. Sorabji are living; whilst Mr. Dinshawji and Mr. Shavakshaw are deceased. Mr. Dinshawji was the second in order—younger

than Sir Hormusjee and elder than Mr. Kaikobad. In his youth whilst he was studying at the Elphinstone College, he had passed away. Due to his premature death, a shadow of gloom and mourning had spread over the family of Seth Cowasji Dinshaw. Seth Cowasji had the misfortune in his old age to lose a bright, brilliant and promising son. Yet he bore this catastrophe with great fortitude.

Mr. Shavakshaw was the youngest brother of Sir Hormusjee. He and his wife, Bai Avanbai whilst driving in a car from Bombay to Poona towards the end of 1937 met with a fatal motor-accident on the way; and both succumbed to death immediately. The whole Adenwala family was plunged into mourning on account of this distressing incident. The aged Sir Hormusjee bore this tragic heart-rending event with great fortitude. Mr. Shavakshaw had received his primary and secondary education at Bombay. Thereafter he had proceeded to London, and acquired practical knowledge, relating to different branches, as would be suitable, useful and serviceable for his firm. After returning from London, he had joined his father's firm. On several occasions he was given charge of the Bombay branch of the firm; and on these occasions he earned great repute on account of his tactful nature. Since then, he had rendered a good account of himself by taking active interest in the branches of the firm at Hodeida, Berbera and Zanzibar.

In 1916, Mr. Shavakshaw separated from part-

nership with his brothers. He severed his connection with his father's firm and commenced doing business independently. He opened a glass manufacturing factory at Mahim in Bombay; and thus furnished one more proof of Parsee enterprise.

Mr. Shavakshaw was married to Bai Avanbai, daughter of Mr. Dadabhai Merwanji Jijibhai. Of this marriage, he had two sons—Cowasji and Dinshaw, and one daughter, Jerbai. The elder son, Cowasji went to England for business purposes, acquired sound business training, and has joined his father's business after returning to India. The younger son Dinshaw had also acquired higher education in England. He too, was drowned, along with his cousin, whilst going to swim at the Juhu seashore.

Mr. Shavakshaw had travelled to important cities of Europe, three times in company with his wife Avanbai and children. He was genial in disposition, good-natured, possessing high ideals and virtuous. His charities, too, shed lustre on his family glory.

After having described briefly about the existing as well as the deceased sons of Seth Cowasji, we will now write about his two brothers, the two uncles of Sir Hormusjee who have given a valuable share in the firm of Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw and Brothers, and whose children are still giving their share in this fortunate firm.

Seth Cowasji had two brothers: Dorabji Dinshaw, and Pestonji Dinshaw. Mr. Dorabji was born in the village Deesa, in Surat District. After acquiring at Bombay, education sufficient for the purpose, he had, in 1854, proceeded to Aden as a clerk in the firm of the P. & O. Company at Aden. The very next year he was made a partner, in the firm, newly founded by his elder brother. There was ideal and enviable connection between both the brothers. Not only that, but Mr. Dorabji always acted on the advice of his elder brother, towards whom his devotion and loyalty were unexampled.

In 1876 Mr. Dorabji was appointed 'Consul' for Portugal in Aden. In 1878, he was appointed Vice-Consul for Spain at Aden, which post he held till 1899. Taking into consideration his successful and satisfactory services as Consul for Portugal at Aden for seventeen years, the Portuguese Government conferred upon Mr. Dorabji a distinguished title and the medal connected with the insignia. It was in 1904 that exactly fifty years had elapsed since he went to Aden. In commemoration therefore, of his golden jubilee, the assistants of the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers presented him with an address that year.

Mr. Dorabji was married to Bai Dosibai. This good lady died at Bombay in 1900. Of this marriage, she had four children all sons—Ruttonji, Muncherji, Rustomji and Dinshawji. Of all these four, only Rustomji is living still. Mr. Dorabji passed away in 1907 at Lonavla. Rs. 24,000 were

Sir Hormusjee and his Family.



Sir Hormusjee, Behen Alanmai, Seth Dinshawji, Seth Framroz, Bai Manekbai

Sitting on the stool : Seth Nusserwanji Hormusjee

given in charity on the occasion of his *Uthamna* ceremony.

Mr. Dorabji's eldest son Ruttonji was married to Bai Cooverbai, sister of Sir Hormusjee. But Mr. Ruttonji died at the young age of 34 whilst he was in charge of the Zanzibar branch of the firm. Cooverbai had two sons, Kaikhushru and Meherji. Of these the elder Kaikhushru is dead whilst the other, Meherji is today giving faithful co-operation to Mr. Framroz and Mr. Dinshawji at the firm at Aden of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers. Mr. Meherji's marriage took place with Bai Tehmina, eldest daughter of Mr. Rustomji. Out of this wedlock, the couple have got five daughters—Jer, Amy, Pillan, Koomi and Silla.

Mr. Dorabji's second son Muncherji is also deceased. He had worked at Aden and in other branches like Zanzibar etc. Later he severed his connection with his father's firm, and led a life of retirement. His daughter Bai Jaiji was married to Mr. Sorabji Khurshedji Gandhi. But Mr. Muncherji's misfortune was that both these husband and wife had died in his lifetime.

Mr. Dorabji's third son Rustomji was born in 1868. He is the only surviving son of Mr. Dorabji and he is still a partner in the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw & Brothers, and plays his part very faithfully.

Mr. Rustomji joined his father's firm at Aden in 1891, and after the death of his father Dorabji,

he was made a partner in the firm. He has done his best to increase the prestige and credit of the firm. During the absence at Aden of his father and since his death, he was appointed temporarily a Consul for Portugal and Spain. Many a time, from 1907 upto 1925 he has satisfactorily performed his duties as Honorary Secretary of the Parsee *Anjuman* of Aden, and was instrumental in making the *Anjuman* Funds swell appreciably. He has travelled with his family in chief cities of Europe.

Mr. Rustomji was married to Bai Aimai, second sister of Sir Hormusjee, in 1889. By her he had three male issues, Navroji, Framroz and Cowasji, and two female issues—Tehmina and Piroja. All the three sons of Mr. Rustomji are married, and manage their own business. Mr. Framroz works with his father in the Bombay branch of the firm. Mr. Navroji does business independently.

About Mr. Rustomji's eldest daughter, Tehmina, we have mentioned above. His second daughter Bai Piroja was married to Mr. Sorabji Dorabji Vachha; but he died at London to the great sorrow and grief of his family members and relatives.

Mr. Rustomji is a gentleman with very plain habits, religious and virtuous in character, and a contented nature. He has a legitimate pride for his community and is charitably disposed. He is faithfully co-operating with Sir Hormusjee and Mr. Kaikobad.

Mr. Dorabji's fourth son Dinshawji died in May 1938. He was simple, devotional, genial and cheerful.

Seth Cowasji Dinshaw's younger brother Pestonji was born at Bombay. He went to Aden in 1855, served there for some time in the Commissariat Department, and in 1856 joined the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Brothers as a partner.

During the Abyssinian War in 1857 he satisfactorily performed his duties along with his brother Cowasji in supplying provisions to the British Army.

During the attack on Suakim in 1882 also he supplied provisions to the satisfaction of the authorities.

Mr. Pestonji did his duty at the Zanzibar branch of the firm with great zeal and won the esteem and admiration, not only of the British officers, but also of the Sultan.

In 1893 Mr. Pestonji separated from the partnership with his brothers. Having severed his connection with the firm, he did business independently. Before his death at Aden in 1895, however, a compromise was arrived at between the brothers. On account of his social nature, he had gathered round himself a large and influential circle of Englishmen and natives.

After the death of Mr. Pestonji his two sons, Hirjeebhai and Darabshaw took over the independent business of their father. The elder son Hirjibhai died, leaving behind him one son and three daughters. The other son Darabshaw was married to Bai Shirinbai, the youngest sister of Sir Hormusjee. Mr. Darabshaw died in 1911 leaving a son behind him. This son Dinshawji, is doing his duty faithfully today in the Bombay office under the patronage of Sir Hormusjee, Mr. Kaikobad, Mr. Rustomji and Mr. Dinshawji Hormusjee.

CHAPTER XI

Sir Hormusjee's Benefactions

PARSEES and charity, it has been proved are two synonymous terms. In this little Iranian community well-known for its courage, energy and industry this quality of charity is noticeable to a remarkable extent. Not only in India but throughout Europe and America the Parsees are famous for their wide and cosmopolitan charities. In the nineteenth century the stream flowed vigorously but in the twentieth a slight set back was noticeable although the stream flows on; what form it will take in the future it is difficult to estimate but we hope that the Parsees will go on being charitable and help all causes as they have been doing unstintingly for generations. Just as there is a Hatem-e-Tai among the Arabs, a *Daneshwari* Karna among the Hindus, so there have been a series of *Hatem-Tais* among the Parsees; men who have taken charity as their watchword and have helped the less fortunate section of humanity in every way. In the nineteenth century we have a fair galaxy of names, men who must have given millions of rupees, men like Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy, Sir Dinshaw Maneckji Petit, Mr. Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, Mr. Cowasji Dinshaw, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, etc., and the twentieth century boasts of men like Sir Hormusjee Cowasjee Dinshaw etc. to whom giving is a religion. These men have all given

generously and have kept alive the tradition of charity, the fruits of which and the advantages from which Parsees and various other communities in India are enjoying.

Parsee charity is more remarkable because it is cosmopolitan and makes no distinction of caste or creed. Parseeism is—as is shown in the previous pages,—directly varying with philanthropy and inversly proportional to parsimony.

The peculiarity of Parsee charity is that it is as luxuriantly cosmopolitan as it is lavishly sectarian and communal. Hence it is universally applauded and hence also it surpasses in importance the millions of dollars or sovereigns given in alms and charity even in such advanced countries of much vaunted civilisation as those of America and Europe because these 'white race millionaires' do charity for their own people.

A hasty round in Bombay and its suburbs will convince to the core even a stranger that the Parsee community—in numbers—insignificant is really the most dominant in India—not only politically and economically but also in civilization of all sorts. These children of ancient Iran, have paid their attention not only to dire human needs, but also to the voiceless and defenceless dumb mute creatures so useful to men, but so ill-used and neglected by the people at large.

These pioneers of industry and commerce—i.e. the Parsee Zoroastrians, are the founders of the most of the educational establishments, founders of free dispensaries, wells and tanks, of the gymnasiums, health homes, physical culture centres, gymkhanas, inns, roads, gardens and orchards etc. They have also erected *Deremehers*, Fire-Temples, Towers of Silence, hospitals, dispensaries, rest houses, etc.

They have also set apart millions for giving monthly donations to the needy paupers of their own as well as other communities. Also there are some private and family funds to aid the victims of misfortune fallen from high estates, but who would not stoop to take up alms in open unabashed manner. There are trusts both cosmopolitan and sectarian to help the promising youths from the rising generation to further their studies in schools, colleges, as also in industrial or technical institutes. There are even trusts, which lend money to brilliant youngsters in thousands of rupees to further their studies in India or outside without burdening them with interest, but with a proviso to repay the alloted sum on or after they settled in life to have a decent living. Also millions are set apart to save those who fell victims to sudden wrathful calamities of Nature divinely ordained as floods, earthquakes etc.; there are millions set apart for propelling and furthering humanitarian movements of any sort so ever.

A true 'blue-blooded' Parsee takes the utmost

satisfaction if he gets an opportunity to serve humanity either physically, economically, mentally, morally or even spiritually; and thanks Ahura-Mazda the Benign Creator for such an opportunity being given to him.

Charity and millions are not synonymous terms: to be prone to charity needs refined qualities both of the head and the heart,—universal outlook and openness of heart, Love of fellow-men and a tenderness for animals and even vegetation, —and a cultured mind to see the whole Universe as one family,—and intrapenetration and introspection into the workings of Divinity and Nature: as defined by the great poet:

"All are but parts of One Stupendous Whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul".

—that alone makes a man charitably disposed even though he be a pauper. Hence, such qualities have made the Parsees proverbial, "Parsee is another name for charity and self-sacrifice."

These refiner qualities give the Parsees a domination over other races among whom they live as the Parsees consider the opportunity given to them for doing good to others as a particular blessing. The acquisition of wealth is the result of hard work, luck, tact and knowledge but after acquiring it to use it for others' benefit shows extreme nobility of purpose and borders almost on the divine. Many people there are who have been able to amass large



Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw Kt., O.B.E., M.V.O.

fortunes but to be charitable with that money is the privilege of the blessed few. Charity is the outcome of the noble mind. It presupposes a generous heart, a broad vision, an affection for human being, a realisation that all men are as one large family created by God. With charity goes above all those rarest of virtues, the gift of imaginative insight which enabled a man to place himself in another's position and to realise his surroundings. There are other communities also charitably minded but the Parsees are undoubtedly as *Mahatma* Gandhi recently observed "the most philanthropic community" in the world today.

Now to come to Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw,—he is a type of the early Parsees—the veritable scions of the imperial races of Iran. He is preserved as a pole-star for the guidance of the rising generation both for simplicity and nobility of nature,—and orthodox in habits and manners with that harmonious blending viz. a reformer in spirit, head and heart: he has gained a wonderful hold on the Parsees both of Aden and of Bombay.

This popularity is due to his stainless morality and tenderness of heart charitably disposed. His father and uncle had risen to power and pelf by sheer dint of assiduity from the lowest rung of the ladder, and though Sir Hormusjee has never seen any monetary disparagement yet he is sober-minded enough to think of the hardships undergone by his father and uncle before they attained greatness and

popularity. Hence he thinks humility to be the key-note of success in life. Hence too, he lends a helping hand to the despondent, the needy and the poor, whose miseries he is too soft-hearted and mild to witness without concern.

Sir Hormusjee thinks that his life is well-spent if he were to lift up those embroiled in miseries: and he always meditates some means to lift the poor Parsees from the mires and mud-pools of misfeasance into which they have fallen.

Sir Hormusjee's charities are based on deep laid, practicable plans. Sir Hormusjee is conspicuous for his large-hearted, generous and cosmopolitan charities; he always extends his helping hand to every movement intended for the benefit and welfare of his fellow Zoroastrians, whether in matters connected with the progress and extension of education and knowledge, the relief of suffering humanity, the helping of the indigent or the establishment of the works of public utility and benevolence.

Sir Hormusjee, like Mr. Henry Ford, believes in the motto: 'Work is worship' and so is averse to that false charity by which crores of idlers are maintained in India as burdens to active element. He is not prone to help idleness and lethargy even under the pretext of abject poverty. According to his sound opinion true charity must aim at driving away lethargy, indolence, wretchedness, misery, false pride, and idle loafling from the community

by substituting independent profession or craft and trade. Also, art, architecture and such innumerable other honourable and decent employments to which the young folk of the community may be attracted with energy, force and fervour.

In his friendship as well as in his donations in charities, he never dreams of differences of race and religion. Sir Hormusjee's sympathies with the deserving poor makes him a liberal subscriber to all recognised causes irrespective of race, politics or creed.

His instinct of charity is never misled through any external influence, it being the outcome of a pure, frank, guileless heart-instinct. He does not count as charity the money thrown away with an aim to a mere title or earthly gain, which has not a touch of sincerity or selfless resignation to the will of the Almighty.

Sir Hormusjee's name has become a household word in numerous places and he is highly honoured and respected by an overwhelming Parsee majority. Even in other alien communities of Aden and Bombay too, his name is becoming a household word: and after his late revered father his auspicious name will be carved in letters of gold in the future history of the Parsees.

Sir Hormusjee is a great leader of the modern Parsees and is the last of those Parsee *Sethias*, who

like Lord Chesterfield is a patron of everything that is good, grand, great and ennobling. Owing to his rare and exalted character and wonderful acts of charity and goodwill, and by his humanitarian services to the community and the city, people of all communities do honour and respect him as a grand citizen of Bombay. Whoever pays a visit to his historic and palatial residence *Adenwalla Baug*, whether he be a Parsee, Hindu, Muslim, Jew or Christian, whether he be rich or poor, young or old, acquainted or unacquainted, a student or hapless widow: Sir Hormusjee no sooner reads his or her name than he pays a personal reception, and handshakes and hears the person with a calm, collected and concentrated attention and pleases him by giving the visitor something atleast, but never allows anyone to go away from him empty-handed and depressed hearted. Such pure, limpid, heartfelt and pleasing ways of giving alms and doles, but at the same time preserving the honour and self-pride of the needy poor is rarely to be seen in many a self-imposed 'man of charity'.

There is no end to Sir Hormusjee's great flow of charitable instincts. His charities are so secret, scattered and widely distributed that no proper account of them is obtainable. He does not parade by publishing monthly or yearly reports of his charities. But I consider it my encumbent and inavoidable duty to give a short sketch of his quiet, secret, many-sided, cosmopolitan and solid charities so that others might follow it.

Sir Hormusjee is the last of the *Sethias* I know, who is always prepared to spend money for the public good. He is held in the highest esteem by all classes of people for his character, boundless munificence and innate nobility of the soul. He is exceedingly charitable; his heart is as pure as gold and as soft as the mango pulp. A man or a woman who is deserving hardly goes back from the precincts of his charitable mansion, *Adenwalla Baug*, without receiving his or her due. He sits with a cheque book in his hands from the early hours of the day after his usual Zoroastrian devotions are offered to Lord *Ahura Mazda* and his magnanimity is unique and royal. This old gentleman reminds one of the great and well known Hatem-e-Tai, who gave unstintedly from his treasures, who was a model of Arab manliness and munificence and whose name has become proverbial in Arab literature for liberality. Sir Hormusjee speaks little, loves everyone to tell his tale of weal or woe and like one of the supermen responds to every call on his purse. He needs no persuasion to give as he is the essence of *dharma* which in the practical Zoroastrian religion is indicated by philanthropy.

There is no end to Sir Hormusjee's secret charities. His subscription to worthy causes are many, but no account is kept of the same. Sir Hormusjee, personally has by now donated several lakhs of rupees in charity and has helped many a Parsee by way of monthly help, books, educational fees etc. To scholarship funds he is always ready to contribute; the number of poor but deserving

students whom he helps individually to complete their education is very large, but cannot be stated with any approach to accuracy, owing to the privacy with which he carries out these objects of charity; while he is ever ready to contribute to the cost of literary research into the history and tenets of Zoroastrian theology, Zoroastrian culture and Zoroastrian philosophy.

Sir Hormusjee has the same fellow-feelings for the Irani Zoroastrians as he has for those of India. Sir Hormusjee is making similar arduous attempts as were made in the eighteenth century by Mr. Nusserwanji Coyajee, and by Sir Dinshaw Manekji Petit in the nineteenth century A.D. It was with such a noble object in view that Sir Hormusjee—like his contemporaries Mr. Peshtonji Marker, Ardeshir E. Reporter and the late Mr. Manekjee L. Hantaria—is taking in all fields of activity pertaining to Iran a most forward part. It is under his patronage that the 'Iran League' is rendering useful and valuable services both to the Parsees of India and Persia by constantly aiming at closing the bonds of union between the so long lost children of the soil, i.e. the Parsees and the ancient Fatherland, i.e. Iran. Sir Hormusjee has allowed the constant flow of money by way of charity to strengthen the tie that binds the Parsees to their ancient home.

In order that the Muslims and the Zoroastrians of Iran might become conversant with the sacred literature of the Zoroastrian faith, Sir Hormusjee

has made several Parsee books to be translated into Persian especially giving large donations to the learned scholar and writer Prof. Aga Poure Dawood to translate into Persian the *Yesht* and the *Avestan* Prayers as well as the *Gathas* to be freely circulated among the learned and aspiring scholars, young and old of the new Iran and 'Young Persia' of the Rezashahi regime. He also helped Prof. Razwi to write a book compromising Islam with Zoroastrianism and also has helped other minor scholars to write books, pamphlets and periodicals appertaining to Iranian reforms, civilisation, science, literature, art, architecture and also about modern evolutions in Iran, whether such articles be written by Hindus or Muslims, Christians or Jews or by the co-religionists of his own race. He has also charitably disposed off over Rs. 15,000 while he was on his visit to various cities of Iran during his historic tour of Persia in 1925.

A few years back Sir Hormusjee had handed over to the Iran League, Government Promissory Notes of the face value of Rs. 7,000 on condition of using the yearly interest to support various charitable establishments in Iran. Out of these Rs. 7,000, Rs. 2,000 were reserved for *Anjuman-e-Naseri* at Yezd, Rs. 500 for Khusru Jehanian Girls' School at Yezd, Rs. 1,000 for Kawayani School, Kerman, Rs. 1,000 for the National School, Kerman, Rs. 500 for the Girls' School, Kerman and Rs. 1,000 for *Anjuman-e-Naseri*, Kerman. Over and above these, he has given Rs. 2,000 in cash in the funds of the

Teheran Girls' School. Sir Hormusjee has contributed Rs. 1,000 into the Firdausi Memorial Funds, raised to erect a grand Mausoleum on the revered tomb of Firdausi, and thus to perpetuate the memory and immortalise the name of that great but the most wronged poet of the world. Sir Hormusjee is planning elaborate and useful schemes even in his old age for the amelioration of the Irani Zoroastrians in their entirety and with a far-sighted purpose to make these despondent Iranis self-respecting and self-helping. In A.D. 1936 Sir Hormusjee declared a grant of Rs. 10,000 for the purpose of purchasing large plots of land round about Persepolis with a view to improve the economic condition of the Irani Zoroastrian farmers and peasants; and with that object in view an elaborate correspondence has taken place between Arbab Kaikhusroo Shahrukh Mirza — the Zoroastrian member of Iranian *Majlis* or Parliament and Mr. F. K. Dadachanjee, Solicitor, Bombay, for coming to some definite basis on that subject. This elaborate and noble conception of Sir Hormusjee is really well worthy of appreciation, and if once it is put into force, he will be taken as a saviour of several Irani Zoroastrian families and the praises and encomiums of Sir Hormusjee will be sung far and wide into the whole length and breadth of modern Iran, and its echoes will be resounded for a long time ever after. Though there are insurmountable difficulties in the way of the scheme, yet they will be automatically removed as days go by and Sir Hormusjee's grand charities will ever stand

in good stead for the help of several Zoroastrian Irani families—such being the natural conclusion to be arrived at by observing the brilliant Lines of Fame and Destiny on the auspicious palms of Sir Hormusjee.

Sir Hormusjee's charity is especially centralised for the benefit of the Bombay Parsees mainly and for the benefit of the Parsees of the whole of India in general. He earnestly and ardently desires that the Parsees might again rise to the level of their past prosperity, and wishes that the Parsee youths leave off the serfdom of service, again to concentrate their energies and talents in independent professions and trades; and not only should they get fame and renown of their twelfth to nineteenth century ancestors, but that thereby the questions of unemployment and wretchedness that have crept in recent years be thoroughly expunged and squashed off, so thorough is his reliance in independent self-acting achievements.

In this way Sir Hormusjee has girded up his loins with fervour and spirit to improve the status and condition of the Parsee community in general, and he is also all-intent for the future improved position of these great but important minority of India now fallen in the mires and mud-pools, economic, social, and political, viz. the Parsees.

Sir Hormusjee is closely connected with several Parsee charity organisations and as such he is trying his levelled best to solve the problem of un-

employment and decrease the average of disconsolate Parsees, and by means of benevolent institutions, he also tries to uproot and oust wretchedness and paupery from among the community.

When the late Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawalla formed an elaborate, original and intelligent scheme to brush off, and almost eliminate unemployment from among the community, then that scheme was hailed by Sir Hormusjee, and not only so, he actually put his shoulders to the wheel to propel that scheme in practice and make it effectively workable. Thus he turned the theory into practice, and as a part-shower, he at once gave a handsome donation of Rs. 10,000 for the realization of that fructified scheme, and so eased the *impasse* work of Sir Sorabji and his co-worker Sir Pheroze Sethna. Both these gentlemen are long since dead, yet the scheme is however set afoot, and we hope and trust that it is slowly but steadily gaining ground, after being put in force.

Sir Hormusjee is closely in touch with the Parsee Mutual Benefit Society which is really doing a great service to the Parsee poor and middle classes. Under the help, guidance and protection of these societies innumerable disconsolate Zoroastrians by self-help and industry are able to maintain themselves and their family members with honourable and decent living. To perpetuate the memory of his late revered father —Cowasjee Dinshaw of Aden,—Sir Hormusjee has established an Endowment Fund under the control

of the above Mutual Benefit Society, to help the poor Parsees to seek employment and also to lend or loan money to the poor Parsee businessmen. Under the auspices of the same Association, a third establishment is found, to engage the poor Parsees to become grain dealers, cloth merchants etc. with the purest motive that the Parsee Youths might leave off humiliating services to employ themselves as businessmen or merchantmen, Sir Hormusjee uses his personal influence to give as advance money a sum ranging between Rs. 10 and 765 by this very Mutual Benefit Society,—to worthy, forward-spirited, adventurous and pushing youthful aspirants. Sir Hormusjee has given all possible encouragement, uplift and help to these institutions which really preserves all the vested interests of the community. He has patronised this body by a handsome donation of Rs. 30,000 and a further sum of Rs. 20,000 towards its building fund. Similarly, many other great and small charity establishments are helped by Sir Hormusjee. Parsee community is really fortunate in having such a simple, humble, sympathetic, leader like Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw to guide them so well in the tides of time.

Another great benefit accruing to the community from Sir Hormusjee is cheap-rented chawl for the poor Parsees at Mahim near the sea-coast. Since the last hundred years in the over-populated and densely-crowded city of Bombay, the problem of housing accommodation has become all-important. Every year in Bombay one sees erections of

artistic, pompous, stupendous, attractive and decorous new houses, buildings, and towering structures that remind us of the sky-scrapers of New York in U.S.A., and then there are also bungalows, garden houses, but they are becoming a rarity. Concrete structures with their ugly squares has become the fashion of the day rather than dignified stone and brick structures.

Everyday the property market of Bombay announces purchases and sales of new plots of land, and yet the mystery of mysteries and the wonder of wonders is that the rents are constantly and steadily increasing. The state of affairs do not stop here only, the Rent Control Act is also puzzling and suffocating. In this way due to manifold clashing causes, the conditions of the citizens of the ever-progressive city of Bombay in general is most pitiable. This state of abject misery is as much or even more affecting the intelligent and 'advanced community' of the Parsees of Bombay as it is to the other variegated races among whom they live, move and have their being. Parsees take the premier position in the art of living, and in the enjoyment of the luxuries of life and the parti-coloured 'economy of human life.' Parsee house was once synonymous for cleanliness, purity and piety; and was taken to be the very asylum and receptacle for all the laws of eugenics, hygiene, health and sanitation. The delicately framed Parsee constitution is alien to dense atmospheric living, and cannot live in those thickly crowded localities and veritable slums in

which Muslim and Hindu families can live. These may be the outcome of their being the descendants of the great empire-builders the mighty minds of old, the Iranians of the royal race.

Having been the scions of such mighty ancestors it is no wonder that the Parsees show the merits of mightiness and demerits of luxury of their ancient forefathers.

Even the most ordinary commoner among the Parsees would seek a dwelling for his family, which is hygienically fit for living and also he would see to other conveniences of life too.

Hence in this direction of supplying house accommodation to the poor and lower middle class of the community was first taken in hand at least some fifty years back. In the last half of the nineteenth century, the late Sir Dinshaw Manekji Petit, (the first Baronet), actuated by the purest motives of keeping Parsee poor families in harmony, peace, comfort and comity, and with a view to keep them in healthy and sanitarily fit surroundings and to ease their living economically,—he first began to build *chawls* with cheap nominal rents. Sirs Ness and Khusroo N. N. Wadia,—brothers,—have added one more ideal, charitable colony on a larger scale for the Parsee poor, viz. the *Khushroo Baug* at Colaba.

Even Sir Hormusjee has done charities in this direction and so by such charitable colonies various

Parsee families have been saved from tasting the deepest drags of disparagement and decadence during the present downward curve of decline of the Parsee race as a whole, and the crucial question of pauperism has been to a certain extent solved and mitigated. By such elaborate and comprehensive schemes of cheap Parsee housing,—we see innumerable Parsee colonies from Colaba right upto Bandra and Thana.

Sir Hormusjee has started a similar scheme for Parsee poors at Aden and he even meditates to purchase in the island of Uran in Colaba district opposite Bombay harbour nearly 400 acres of land from the Bombay Government for Rs. 20,000 or so, and there to found a cheap-rented Parsee Colony. As Sir Hormusjee is the patron and President of the 'Uran Parsee Association', we earnestly wish that under his able guidance, care and patronage, a cheap Parsee colony for the amelioration of the poor of the community should come into existence at Uran the sooner.

Even in religious matters too, Sir Hormusjee following the suit of his illustrious father has become famous. Several Parsee *Anjumans* of India enjoy a solid help and backing from him and he constantly gives great or small quotas for their perpetuation and support. He is a trustee and Chairman of the Aden and Lonavla Parsee *Anjumans.* He is also a revered and confided trustee of the Bombay Parsee *Panchayet* and their secured posi-



Master Cowasjee Nusserwanjee H. C. Dinshaw,
Grandson of Sir Hormusjee

tions in money matters are solely due to his help and guidance. Whatever individual or body that approaches him for help in dire needs is sure of the approach of an extended helping hand and none returns disappointed from his place—thus testifying to the devotedness of the parental care of the good faith of *Ahura Mazda* preached by the Great Lord Zarthushtra. Sir Hormusjee is a Zoroastrian of Zoroastrians. The Zoroastrian *Anjumans* not only of Bombay, Aden and Lonavla but of many an outlying place owe much to Sir Hormusjee for the munificent aid he lends in maintaining the charitable institutions, *Dar-e-Mehers*, Towers of Silence, *Sagdis*, and their Zend Avesta Schools. There is scarcely a single upcountry *Anjuman* Fund to which Sir Hormusjee like the late Mr. Meherwanji M. Cama has not contributed. No man or institution appeals to him without receiving something from him.

When Sir Hormusjee was at Aden he became very popular by his many-sided charities. He has contributed a substantial and push-giving share in various funds erected there at Aden, either as sombre *inmemoriums* or as jubilation subscriptions; and all these sums put together might now amount to about more than Rs. 50,000.

In A.D. 1912 Sir Hormusjee became a recipient of the M.V.O. At that time the Aden *Anjuman* gave a public dinner in his honour at the *Meherwan Baug* and he contributed to that Parsee *Anjuman's* general fund a sum of Rs. 5,000.

Again Sir Hormusjee has contributed in charities about Rs. 2,000 to celebrate the auspicious occasion of the marriage of his only daughter Bai Alanmai and on the joyous occasions of the marriage of his two sons Framroz and Dinshawji, he set apart Rs. 2,000 more for charitable endowment thus making in all Rs. 5,000 to which he again added Rs. 1,000 more to bring the total upto Rs. 6,000. This endowment fund has now risen to nearly Rs. 10,000 and from its interest he now gives an yearly quota to Aden Anjuman General Fund; and also to the homeless and houseless orphan boys the monthly school fees.

In 1915 A.D. his revered consort the late Bai Manekbai died. To perpetuate her memory Sir Hormusjee handed over to the Aden Parsee Anjuman a sum of Rs. 12,000; from whose interest a part is spent in performing annual death ceremonies with holy chants and incantations and the rest of the interest is spent in helping the poor females to get married and the indigent girls to have sacred thread ceremonies of the *Navjote*. Even this fund has now risen upto Rs. 20,000. Since the last thirty to thirty five years as a bonus to his confidential assistants, clerks and servants of his firm, he is giving nearly Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 9,000 annually on the auspicious occasion of his birthday anniversary. This usage still continues and this money spent for years as bonus can now amount to Rs. 1,50,000 in all.

Sir Hormusjee's personal and secret charities amount to about Rs. 20,00,000 and his auspicious

hands dispose off yearly Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000 in charity. Charity is also made by him through the instrumentality of the firm of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw and Bros. whose branches are at Aden, Bombay, Zanzibar and elsewhere and of which Sir Hormusjee is the Senior Partner. But these charities though done under the guidance and consent of Sir Hormusjee alone are quite apart from his own personal and private charities.

Sir Hormusjee's charitable disposition makes him give preference to a large number of his co-religionists, the Parsees, being employed in the various branches of his firm. The Aden branch of the firm alone contains nearly a hundred Parsees having salaries small or great. One part of the Aden branch of the firm is also set apart only as a charitable establishment. During the life-time of his wife the late Bai Manekbai, on every occasion of her recovery from serious illness, Sir Hormusjee, to express his joy and thanksgiving to the Almighty used to allot certain sums for charity,—these sums have now accumulated to about Rs. 10,000 and is organised and established under the name of 'Bai Manekbai Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw Band and Musical Fund.' Sir Hormusjee is also spending various sums in charity for years on occasions like *Navjota,* marriage, and *Uthamna*; but of which no exact records are preserved. He is also sparing Rs. 200 for the *Athornan Mandal* every month, as he has a great regard and reverence for the *Athornans* and he is very optimistic for their future.

Even the societies and associations like the Iran League, the *Jashan* Committee and a host of others he allots yearly if not monthly quotas.

Sir Hormusjee being strongly in favour of education in general, he is for years found to patronise educational institutions. In the universal spread of human reform as well as in the formation and building up of character and crystallisation of morality, education is inavoidable and Sir Hormusjee has certain definite ideas and ideals appertaining to that. The universal mass uplift of India depends wholly and solely on widespread primary education and Sir Hormusjee has an emphatic certainty about it. Hence for the widespread extent of education he has given the most satisfactory share of his money in charity in Aden, in India and in Iran.

Sir Hormusjee who has made Aden in Arabia in everyway a beautiful city, it is but just natural enough for him to make that town possessed of all benefits and advantages. Till A.D. 1920 Aden had not advanced enough in the direction of education. Although eighty years had passed ever since Aden had come under the control of the British, yet, there was no trace of middle or high class education there. Common, primary type of education was started to be given by Marist Brothers belonging to the mission of the Fransiscan Friars of the Roman Catholic faith and although the British Government had built a nice building intended to be used as a High School in the Camp at Aden, yet the mockery

of it was that no facilities were made to contain in the curriculum of studies a system of syllogistic education that might equal, cope with or approach even the standard of Matriculation Examination of the University of Bombay to whose jurisdiction the Port and suburbs of Aden were for a long time up-til now affiliated. Although there is a very large portion of Gujarati-speaking population at Aden, yet, upto A.D. 1913, only a corrupt sort of language was used there and so the unfortunate children of the Gujarati-speaking public were not given a correct, systematic and decent type of knowledge in their mother-tongue.

Sir Hormusjee compassionately girded up his loins, came to their succours in dire need and made strenuous efforts with a firm resolution to dispel the pall of those difficulties and discrepancies and advanced Rs. 60,000 to start an Anglo-Vernacular School, the establishment to be named as 'Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw Anglo-Vernacular School.' The School in a short span of time has already acquired fame as a well-organised academical institution. In thanks-giving Sir Hormusjee's oilpaint facsimile has been unveiled in the school premises through the subscriptions raised by the Gujarati speaking public—Parsees, Hindus and Muhammadans.

Sir Hormusjee's attachment and affection for the children of the school is almost parental and he personally fills in the heavy losses of hundreds of rupees sustained by the Institute by way of neces-

sary expenses every year and thus he helps to maintain its up-keep in every detail. We hope that this educational institution started under auspicious and well-meant ideals be ultimately able to stand on its own resources and be self-helping in the very near future in order to be able to ignite and instil in the rising youths of the Gujarati speaking public —the steady and shining torch of the light of knowledge, spreading greater and greater brilliance in ever increasing proportions.

Sir Hormusjee has also given a donation of Rs. 2,500 to Chanda Ramji Girls' High School at Bombay. In 1925 Dr. Rabindranath Tagore of Calcutta with a desire to start at his Shantiniketan University a chair for the sacred language of the Zoroastrians—Avesta Zend and Pahlevi,—and also for the Iranian studies under the famous Muslim Irani scholar Dr. Aga Poure Dawood as its first professor,—came to Bombay and in a grand and representative gathering held at *Adenwalla Baug*, he publicly appealed to the Parsee community to send their mite to the subscriptions raised for the up-keep and maintenance of the said chair. In this matter the late Rt. Hon'ble Justice Dr. Sir D. F. Mullan, P.C. took the most active part to raise a fund amounting to nearly a lac of rupees in which Sir Hormusjee donated Rs. 5,000.

Sir Hormusjee is very keenly interested to see a widespread propagation of knowledge in history, geography, literature, science, religion and ethics, philosophy and sociology—among the Parsee race

at large; and in order to realise and fructify this noble aim and purpose he has for years long been patronising the devotees of learned lore and wisdom. He has helped both the Eastern and Western scholars and *Savants* alike, and has given them an impetus to work with an accelerated speed and new vigour and setting forth in black and white their learned and original ideas and researches. Wherever he has found excellence, ability and worth, there he has extended his helping hand with lavish outpour of donations. It is quite unnecessary here to give a detailed account of the literatteurs and scholars encouraged and patronised in this manner by him; and this number is so big that even Sir Hormusjee has forgotten most of them. Such type of encouragement to *Savants*, penmen and journalists is still given continually by Sir Hormusjee even in his green old age; and it is out of question that such patronage will continue even in the future as long as he lives, moves and has his being in this corporeal world and even after him by the grand trusts made by him for these purposes by his illustrious sons.

Sir Hormusjee has so much devotedness for Gujarati literature and language as he has always shown for Persian, Iranian and other languages. Sir Hormusjee is able to speak in pure, easy, limpid Gujarati and he earnestly desires that the Parsees of India should contribute a solid share in the spread of the Gujarati language which for years and centuries almost has become their mother tongue. Sir

Hormusjee has read in his early childhood and in his youthful days even—some novels and romances or stories and *Namas* written in Gujarati by Parsee authors and translators. He has also read the *Shah Nameh* of Firdausi translated into Gujarati. He has been constantly in touch with the modern currents in Gujarati literature and even now he reads occasionally Gujarati monthly magazines, biographies and books of interest. In this way Sir Hormusjee patronises authors, writers, historians, biographers, scientists, poets, and essay-writers etc. and under his patriarchal, august and auspicious care many a budding writer is as it were unearthed from oblivion and from the realm of forgetfulness into the state of realism and lustrous fame. Sir Hormusjee is not merely the benign protector of individual scholars and authors but also helps and patronises the literary and scientific societies, literature publishing bureaus, libraries and also to original scholars who take a dive into the unknown deep sea of widely extensive problems of ancient history and geography. He also helps best of scholars to translate and transcribe rare literary, scientific, philosophic and religious works from the hoary lore preserved in various other languages. Besides these, he gives his helping hand to various rare art collections, museums, picture-galleries and also lends support to *Athornan* institutions, classes for religious and moral training, classes to encourage the training of the Persian language.

Sir Hormusjee is a staunch upholder of tech-

nical education; and classes for the training of students in various technical crafts and handiworks are given substantial monetary help. In the Gwalior Agricultural Scheme started under the patronage of the late Maharaja Jayaji Rao Scindia which aimed at encouraging young Parsees to be honourable agriculturists and independent tillers of the soil side by side with becoming wholesale merchants and retail traders as well. In this noble scheme of ancient heritage Sir Hormusjee has given Rs. 12,000. For the spread of the sacred profession of agriculture so much eulogised in the *Avesta* Sir Hormusjee welcomes every possible scheme. A staunch champion of Indian Vernacular literature, a life-long patron of literary clubs, a ready friend to poor and deserving students, Sir Hormusjee's benefactions are many and varied in the sphere of education. Museum funds, literary funds, and the finances of literary associations are always assured of his help. Sir Hormusjee is a firm believer in the value of manual and industrial training.

Sir Hormusjee's charities are not merely centralised and limited to the promotion of education and the spread of salutary and healthy reforms. He is a firm believer in the doctrine of. *mens Sana in Corpore Sano* and is not slow to realise that his countrymen are prone to devote insufficient attention to bodily exercise. A firm believer in the benefit of athletics, Sir Hormusjee always patronises anything connected with it. He is a physical culturist possessing a finely developed physique and

hence he strongly favours physical training with open air outdoor exercises including swimming, cycling, horsemanship, wrestling, boxing and moderately done physical endurance feats. He knows the importance, limitations and efficacies of body building exercises and physical training of any sort. Body the beautiful being the more inavoidable asset for every human being, Sir Hormusjee has spent a goodly sum in charity even in this direction.

Sir Hormusjee not only believes in plain living and high thinking but firmly believes in the truth of the following words: 'Great Temperance', 'Open Air', 'Easy Labour' and 'Little Care'. Even during his journey in Iran Sir Hormusjee has spent a princely sum in charity in this direction for physical training synchronised with moral, mental and spiritual training. He was very much pleased and gratified to see the sound health and fine physique of comely Irani Zoroastrian children. Even in Bombay several health homes, physical Culture Centres and Gymnasiums are constantly getting solid substantial help from the inexhaustible purse of Sir Hormusjee.

Sir Hormusjee craves to see among the rising Parsee youths solid adamentile body frames and sinews that would recall the past memories of the traditionally preserved stories of such Iranis of superb strength-heroes like Rustom, Sohrab, Aspendyar, Kerashasp and Sam-Nariman. He emphatically believes and resolutely asserts that not only Parsee males but even Parsee females should



Mr. M. R. Bhownagree,
The Enthusiastic Personal Secretary of Sir Hormusjee

have bronze like muscular bodies but without eliminating feminine grace and delicacy. For the physical and vital development of the rising generation of the Parsees and with it to bring into clearer relief the mental and moral excellences, if there was a need to establish a Parsee School Cadet Corps for any school under Parsee guidance to that Sir Hormusjee willingly advanced a sum of Rs. 1,000. In gathering for the performance of physical feats and sports and where prizes were to be distributed, he with all his heart would show his willingness to preside and in his presidential address he would dilate upon the importance and necessities of body building and of scientific, systematic bodily health and physical comforts as regards the art of noble living and various other allied themes. Sir Hormusjee earnestly aspires to see Parsees pioneering and coming ahead of other communities in swimming, wrestling, riding, military training, scout movements, ambulance training, cricket, tennis, hockey and if possible, polo and such other masculine and heroic games.

Sir Hormusjee openly and emphatically declares in favour of inavoidable need of gymnasiums, health resorts, and also for the hygienic state of a large city like Bombay. He demands a goodly number of spacious gardens, fountains and extensively wide *maidans* and open spaces not only as pleasure resorts but also to improve the climatic condition of the city as a whole. It was with this object in view that at Nargol in Thana District

where Parsees live in large numbers, Sir Hormusjee had filled in a stenching tank and on the vast lands thus reclaimed he has formed a garden on a certain area of it and the rest of the vacant space he has reserved for sports and outdoor games for the people. This whole area has been named after his late lamented and revered father as 'Cowasji Dinshaw Park'.

Similarly, at Aden, in the suburbs of Tawahi, Sir Hormusjee has at an expense of Rs. 10,000 built the 'Cowasji Dinshaw Oriental Club Pavilion' and presented it to that Club. Again in the building, sinking and founding of fountains, wells, tanks, sanatoriums, and rest houses etc., he has given his satisfactory share.

Sir Hormusjee holds certain weighty views as regards bodily health and physical comforts and the art of noble living and various other allied things. He believes in the need of a sufficient number of hospitals and free dispensaries for the control and cure of various diseases and for checking the spread of epidemics; but he wanted them to be controlled by educated citizen volunteers and sympathetic and self-sacrificing medical staff that would treat with equal earnestness both the rich and the poor alike, and check waste and mismanagement of any sorts so ever.

As compared to all the civilised and advanced countries, the child mortality has proportionately a very heavy and large toll in India and many poor

and disconsolate patients succumb to the sombre pall of death, through want of care, cure and nursing. Sir Hormusjee feels that people in India have not become hospital-conscious and so the importance of them is not thoroughly realised and brought home to the minds of the masses. Medical comforts and hygienic conditions of bigger cities are comparatively tolerable and even to a certain extent satisfactory, but in villages that contain more than three fourths of the population of India the state is intolerable and humiliating. It is in countrysides and villages, that people die prematurely and untimely due to want of preventive measures, absence of hygienic knowledge and lack of proper medical measures to be administered.

To improve this almost impossible state of affairs Sir Hormusjee is making solitary and almost single-handed herculean efforts by a constant flow of his effective charity. He is ever ready to welcome without hesitation any feasible and practical scheme to ameliorate, mitigate or even tone down to a certain extent this almost hopeless plight.

Following in the footsteps of his father Sir Hormusjee is continually giving a solid, handsome and steady help to several public and private hospitals. Sir Hormusjee's generosity has been extended in this direction and he is a ready supporter of any cause put forward for the benefit of ailing humanity. The Meherhomji, Parkeh and Kerawalla hospitals in Bombay, as well as the Shroff

hospital in Delhi, have benefitted jointly to the tune of nearly Rs. 25,000 while to the Masina hospital, besides a monthly donation of Rs. 100 he has given a donation of Rs. 5,000 in the sacred memory of his beloved wife Bai Manekbai: on condition that a separate endowment account of it be kept with Rs. 5,000 as permanent deposit in a bank and only the intarest accruing therefrom to be used in the hospital expenses. The dispensary his father founded in Aden, has, thanks to Sir Hormusjee's efforts developed into a fine, and up-to-date hospital and is of great assistance to the local population without distinction of caste or creed. Sir Hormusjee is still taking a keen interest in this hospital. Over and above that Sir Hormusjee has been helping several other hospitals in or outside Bombay.

Sir Hormusjee's sympathy and kindliness is reserved not for Parsees alone; it is not merely local or sectarian; it is universal, all-comprehensive and cosmopolitan. His compassion and tenderness does not merely extend to human beings but to dumb and mute creatures as well. Sir Hormusjee's large-heartedness, his keen sympathy with suffering of any kind, his quick reaction to it, his instinct to alleviate it, show the divine make-up of the man. His all-pervading, obliging, self-sacrificing, comiserating, compassionate soul has as much regard and attachment for human beings as for God's dumb creation. This is due to the fact that he believes as much in human sublimity and holiness as in the

piety and innocence of dumb mute creatures. Soul compassion is an ideal attatched to his heart and it is this soul compassion which from old has descended down from the sire to the son in this anciently civilised land of Aryanised India.

From the glorious Mauryan Era, the importance and sacredness of animal life has been publicly announced in India under the combined influences of Buddhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrian Sabianism. The all-powerful and divinely known Maurya Emperor Ashok of Magadha—actuated by humanitarian feelings, and realising the sanctity of every religious soul whether of a human being or an animal,—had shown the index to the holy path of 'mercy that seasons justice'—and surely Ashok was the pioneer of this sort of compassion in India historically. Sir Hormusjee has made all possible attempts for the protection of the cows, especially and cowine species in general; and he is the director—trustee of the Bombay Humanitarian League —an institution which is rendering valuable services for the protection of cows in particular and other dumb animals in general. Sir Hormusjee is keenly interested in the varied activities of the League and has given handsome donations in charity for the maintenance of the *gowshalas* and *pinjrapoles* of Bombay and elsewhere. Sir Hormusjee himself is doing all in his power to encourage such efforts.

Like the great English poet Coleridge, Sir Hormusjee believes:

"He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both men and bird and beast,
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small."

He believes that the individual who loves God's smallest creation utters the truest prayer of his life. Like Mahatma Gandhi, he is a great believer in non-violence; has sympathy for all animals, subscriber to several veterinary hospitals and in a practical way conforms to one of the most insistent dictates of the Zoroastrian faith: "Thou shalt love all God's lesser creatures". In the protection and sacredness of animal life Sir Hormusjee is in the habit of helping the 'Bai Sakerbai Petit Veterinary Hospital' and similar establishments in other cities and here he is actuated by the *Avesta* teaching of Lord Zarthushtra. It would seem a wonderful and successful achievement on the part of Sir Hormusjee that surrounded as he is by alien opinions and views he is never misguided by them but is ever full of overflowing sensations of mercy, love, devotion and compassion as a true follower of Zarthustra. During ordinary times of difficulties Sir Hormusjee extends his helping hand to the poor and the needy but during extraordinary calamities when Nature and God seem to wreak vengeance on sinning humanity by such calamities as earthquakes, fires, storms, volcanic eruptions, devastating famines and draughts, floods and deluge due to excess of rains etc., then Sir Hormusjee's charitable instincts become sharply acute and gives solid and substantial quotas of money in charity on every such mishap

but no detailed accounts are kept of them. Sir Hormusjee's soft, tender and compassionate heart melts at hearing tales of miseries and woes of those victims of Nature's wrath. His keen sensitiveness to suffering and his love of humankind is as great as that of the great English Liberal leader Charles James Fox or the great social worker and writer Mr. C. F. Andrews or Mahatma Gandhi himself. Sir Hormusjee has a delicate and tender heart like these humanitarians. This feminine gentility and tenderness and a temperament to help others in times of need is the key-note of his success in life and of all his public activities. It is this great and outstanding quality which endears him to the hearts of so many of his fellowmen and makes him stand out as one of those rare individuals who can truly say looking back on their lives "I have suffered with those that I saw suffer."

The penetration which Sir Hormusjee has to understand the difficult problems about pauperism and the puzzling questions about the despondent and needy of the community as well as about the unbearable calamities and torments of the helpless is simply marvellous. He considers himself the most fortunate and favoured to be able to solve the tangle about poverty and abjectness.

Sir Hormusjee's charities are extensive and cosmopolitan. Hindu, Parsee, Christian, Jew, or Muslim and even the Goan institutions and individuals have all a share of his well-balanced but profuse

charities. In his undifferentiated and impartially distributed charities, neither caste or creed, race or religion or political party divisions have any *locus standii.* The Catholic character of his charities is shown by the number of miscellaneous funds he subscribes to. During the Great World War he has subscribed to various War Funds. On the occasion of King George the Fifth's Silver Jubilee he did splendid work as Chairman of the Committee for raising money from the Parsees community. He headed the list with a handsome donation and has besides subscribed to Hospital Funds, Red Cross Society, Salvation Army, Ambulance Division, Boy Scout or Girl Guide Associations. Sir Hormusjee occasionally subscribes to Humanitarian and Mercy Leagues, Memorial Funds and for Busts and Statue Funds of distinguished citizens. He has done the same for sanatoriums and rest houses.

Sir Hormusjee has contributed Rs. 1,000 in Sanjan Memorial Fund. It is a peculiarity of his charity that he would clear the way economically of an individual seeking service to make him enjoy the comforts of using means and spending money temporarily as an initiative to any business or employment. Sir Hormusjee to-day enjoys wonderfully wide-spread popularity and fame both among the Parsee community and among other friendly races and tribes. This is solely due to the quality of his unostentatious charity. There is no end to his secret charity and it has been said of him that



Adenwalla Baug, the palatial and historic residence of Sir Hormusjee at Bombay

even his 'left hand knoweth not what his right hand giveth'.

The slow, steady, sedate and constant flow of his solid, substantial charity runs without causing hindrance, annoyance obstruction or harm to surrounding areas or estates, unstultingly, undeviatingly and unbroken; and from the blessed river of charity hundreds of innocent and helpless families take constant, full draughts of sweet limpid water of contentment and thus quench their thirst of need; and bless the source thereof; and Sir Hormusjee considers it a great good luck to be able to get such spontaneous blessings. He gladly lends his grand and majestic *Adenwalla Baug* to be used for Parsee auspicious ceremonies with all his heart. Once I asked Sir Hormusjee as to the inconvenience arising to him and to the members of his family by lending the bungalow so often for such auspicious occasions, Sir Hormusjee with his characteristic optimism, courtesy and smile stated that he earnestly yearns to have the blessings of such families that use the bungalow for such occasions and he firmly believes that such blessings more than repay the inconveniences arising therefrom. Such benevolence is to Sir Hormusjee just, natural, spontaneous and indigenous.

Sir Hormusjee received his knighthood in 1922 and on that occasion the messages of good will, congratulations and good wishes received by him

bore ample testimony to his popularity everywhere. This popularity is the direct result of his generosity, his extreme consideration for others and that rare quality of spontaneous sympathy which he possesses. Sir Hormusjee might have been a recipient thereof even long before this date but he had spent the most important part of his life at Aden. Though British Commonwealth of Nations possesses many colonies, yet Aden is the most unattractive of them all and Britishers are always procrastinating in recognising worth and virtue for titles and honours and hence Sir Hormusjee's charities, duties to the State, glorious record of public life at Aden, loyalty to the British Crown and several works of public welfare and utility—all these were not so rapidly known or realised to the full to be appreciated as they deserved. The advantages that accrued to the public workers in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras and such other large cities are not available so easily to the citizens of Aden and hence Sir Hormusjee's knighthood was delayed unnecessarily, though his loyalty, charity and public utility works were not a whit behind hand of those of his other contemporaries. Such being the case it was more to his credit, that even late his merits were recognised and hence on that occasion his friends, admirers, relatives, assistants of the firm, and institutions and associations far and near that had dealings with him, made jubilations to commemorate the event and surely Sir Hormusjee deserved it fully.

Whoever of the individual personages that has

come in close touch with him, each and everyone of them, has felt in him a helper and a guide to humanity at large and a great man of piety and righteousness too. Really they might say that he came as a boon and a blessing to men. He has preserved to a precision and continued to a clock-work exactitude the proverbial and ancient Iranian heirlooms; viz. the peculiar Parsee stamped hospitality, Parsee high minded and lofty-headed aristocratic nobility of the past ages. This pious-minded Parsee is able to perpetuate the Parsee name in these days probably serving as a connecting link between the stalwarts of the past and the promising and aspiring youths.

Sir Hormusjee's special peculiarity of charity is this that he would often quietly suffer all possible inconveniences without the least complaint thereof or even without the slightest show of discomfiture and displeasure; as he would never allow anybody to know or even remotely suspect him to be upset in the least in anyway because he hates pessimism as a true Zoroastrian.

Sir Hormusjee would rather succumb to circumstances and bow down to the inevitable tides of time, would bear with all inavoidable or insurmountable difficulties and troubles, but despite would welcome the other that had come either to seek his succour or ask his advice. Sir Hormusjee stands for all those qualities which Parsees at their best possessed and has carried on the tradition of

his family. He also displays admirable self-control and unselfishness. He can put up with many things himself but would always help to alleviate other people's sufferings, very often at great personal inconvenience. He believes in good as the main objective of existence and stands out as a real example of a great soul pledged to pure living, clean thinking and virtue.

Sir Hormusjee is a magnetic and impressive personality, virtuous, righteous, liberal-minded and frank-hearted great man of fitting Zoroastrian ideals. Unquestionably he may be termed the *Hatem-e-Tai* of Parsee charity of this twentieth century and he is in every way worthy of such an epithet.

Sir Hormusjee is born a rich man, having come into this world with as it were a silver spoon in his mouth, yet wealth and weal, power and pelf have never led him away to lapse into vain glory, intoxicated pride or foolish conceit. On the contrary by the strength of his immense power of purse, he has tried to drive away poverty; and where there was dismal darkness of ignorance, there he ignited the lustrous taper of knowledge and wisdom and has cleared the way of progress and advancement.

The more Sir Hormusjee gained in wealth in his trade and profession the more accelerated became the stream of his charity, nay, not only that, the charity became more organised, systematised, solidly based, all-pervading and sure-aimed. The



Master Cowasjee Nusserwanji H C Dinshaw,
Grandson of Sir Hormusjee

most glorious Parsee community has mostly due to its own short comings has now fallen from the pinnacle of glory and prosperity that it enjoyed previous to the share mania incident of 1860. It has brought in its trail miseries and woes with discontentment and unemployment.

At such a time looking to the dire needs and necessities, wants and privations as also to unforeseen unfortunate circumstances of those who are in the worst plight and in the most critical state of being the victims of the cruel will of Destiny, at a proper juncture, taking the general good and furtherance, advancement and uplift of the community at heart to lend a helping hand to stop a further hopeless fall,—there are but few rich and kindly souls among the remnants of the aristocracy of intellect, heredity and wealth in this wonderful community to sincerely make the question of community their own. Surely amongst such a few, as chip of the old block Sir Hormusjee most assuredly and positively takes the foremost position. Only such heroic and self-abnegating sincere souls like so many rare gems, really help the Almighty Creator in the progressive functions of the uplift of humanity and evolution of species; which by slow but steady paced advancement and by progressive exaltation lead to that ultimate goal the par excellence;—and this fact is really a matter of bliss, exhilaration and excellence with efficacy and substantiality.

Here it may not be amiss to state that as in the past Parsees had a great share to found or to bring

to the forefront such cities as Broach, Cambay, Surat, Navsari, Udwada and Karachi as well as Poona and Ahmednagar in the Deccan; and just as the first Parsee merchant princes of Bombay,—the Patels, the Setts, the Modis, the Vatcha-gandhis, the Banajis, the Dadyseths, the Readymoneys, the Wadias, the Tatas and a host of others were responsible to change the fisher islands *Haptania* into the later Bombay the Beautiful,—the *Urbus Prima in Indes* under men like Mr. Dadabhoy Nowroji, Sir Pheroseshah Mehta, Mr. J. N. Tata, and other Parsee, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jew or Israelite colleagues, became a great city, harbour and the second city in the Empire; just as Sir Hormusjee N. Mody became the mainstay of the port of Hongkong, in the same way Sir Hormusjee Cowasji Dinshaw and his father Cowasji and uncle Dorabji were the chief factors to make Aden what we now see a priceless jewel in the British Empire. Sir Hormusjee had played a magnificent part in the transformation of Aden from the state of poverty and neglect to its present important position as a thriving, shipping and commercial Port, as a well-regulated town and credit to the British Empire.

To conclude: in spite of the fact that Sir Hormusjee has been born with a silver spoon in his mouth he is not arrogant but kind and considerate. His acquisition of wealth is always accompanied by generosity and as his financial position improved his activities became wider, more cosmopolitan, more extensive in scope and project. Even to-day

about a hundred families of poor Parsee indigents are being supported by him and he takes a remarkable satisfaction out of doing this. It is providential then that the Parsees have in their midst a man like Sir Hormusjee who does everything in his power to better their condition and takes upon himself their troubles.

CHAPTER XII

Sir Hormusjee: Some Characteristics of His Glorious Life.

SIR HORMUSJEE is not only one of the foremost Parsees in Bombay but exercises by reason of his many virtues great influence in the cosmopolitan life of the city. On the two occasions when he was knighted and seriously ill in Europe the flow of letters of congratulations and inquiry was absolutely unprecedented and proved his popularity in black and white. His friendship too is very much coveted because of a singular absence of pettiness in his composition. His conversation is stimulating, his reading extensive and his knowledge of English, Gujarati, Italian and French lends interest to his talk. He has besides that rare gift—a sense of humour and his company is eagerly sought after on that account. He combines in himself culturally the best elements of his own generation as well as of the new. His is a unique personality. A man leading a spotless life—full of good thoughts and deeds and displaying a marked devotion to duty he is an inspiration to his countrymen.

He leads a simple life. His dress, the old fashioned white dress of the Parsees is also simple and with his tall and handsome figure he looks

commanding and dignified. He does not believe in vulgar display but as a friend of the poor sees that they do not need anything. His one aim in life is to drive away the demon of poverty from the Parsees, to give employment to the unemployed, to make youth self-supporting and to instil in all the spirit of religion.

His hospitality both in Aden and Bombay is a byword and scions of British and European royalty and nobility as well as Indian *rajahs* and *Maharajahs* have enjoyed it on their way to and from Europe. In his spacious bungalow at Tardeo also he dispenses the same lavish hospitality. This old house is a model of orthodoxy and the numerous array of scholars, Eastern and Western *savants* have enjoyed Sir Hormusjee's hospitality here. At 83, he is physically fit, happy and contented. His methodical and simple life has helped him to build up his character. In whatever circumstances he may be placed he is happy, hopeful and enthusiastic. He exhibits a very strong sense of duty whether in public or private life and never shirks his responsibilities. He is calm, serious and reticent though he possesses a marked sense of humour. He is averse to publicity and does not do good for the applause that this may bring him. Goodness is inherent in him—his inclination towards it marks him out from the crowd, especially in this age when everything is proclaimed from the housetops and a loud and blatant erudity is the order of the day.

Sir Hormusjee is an ardent Zoroastrian follow-

ing implicitly the dictates of this noble and ancient creed. As a result his personality is marked by simplicity, modesty, purity, sweetness of temperament, kindness of heart, generosity and virtue. Although religious he is by no means bigoted, considering all religious worthy of respect. Sir Hormusjee is widely travelled having visited all continents except Australia. He considers travelling a necessary part of education as without it one cannot widen one's experience or get the right perspective on life. The study of different tongues, peoples, racial characteristics and customs act as an intellectual stimulant and help human beings to live correctly in relation to their fellow-men.

It is as an industrialist, however that Sir Hormusjee has specially made his mark. The country needs to-day men of such great commercial acumen. All the enterprises he is connected with are flourishing concerns and prove if proof were needed that honesty, integrity and hard work cannot be separated from success.

In politics Sir Hormusjee belong to the Moderate Camp. His loyalty to the British Crown is great and he is a firm believer in the British Empire. He intensely admires the British public, British officials, British political and national institutions, British Commercial integrity, British writers and the Englishman's sense of truth, humour and high ideals.

He is not himself a visionary of the type whose

flights of fancy does not extend beyond the realm of imagination. He is a man of affairs, practical, far-sighted, with a clear understanding of the major and minor problems of life. The "Sunday Standard" once wrote about him: "Intellectual, dignified and possessing great charms of manners, Sir Hormusjee's character is essentially solid rather than showy. He is still the last of the Romans looking dubiously at the more erratic trends in modern ideas and ideals. A man with courage of his convictions, he has never hesitated, despite public clamour, to express his own opinions. The meretricious glamour that surrounds some of his countrymen may not be attached to his name. But he has something more substantial and solid to show in a long life devoted in his services to his community and his country".

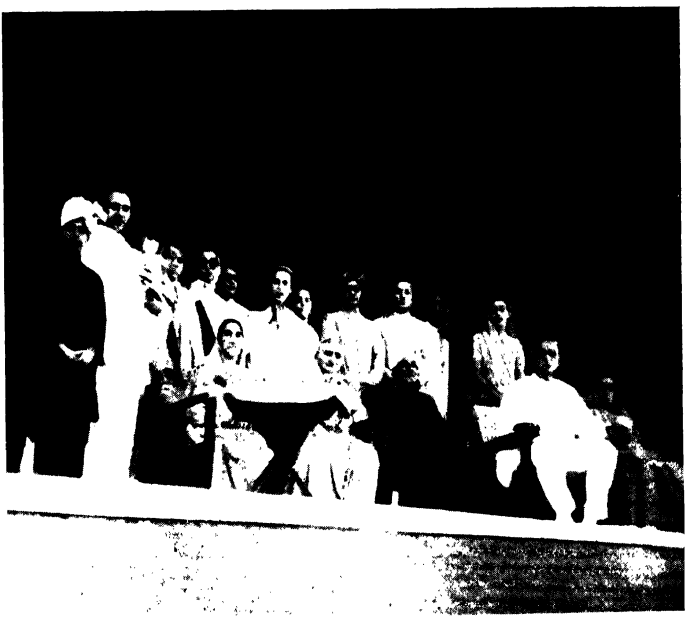
As a politician he has not achieved that popularity which has come the way of other men, but his services to the country have been solid and far-reaching in their effects and the public realise it and are proud that they have in their midst a quiet and unobtrusive worker. His wisdom and his progressive attitude to life add strength to his character and he always expresses his admiration for such qualities as simplicity, fearlessness independence and strength of mind.

Not only in Bombay but in Asia, Europe and America Sir Hormusjee is well-known for his commercial acumen and integrity. In the world of commercial navigation especially that of the British Empire Sir Hormusjee has taken a prominent part

and his firm has a permanent place in the annals of British Imperial trade.

Sir Hormusjee has always believed in aiming at the highest ideals, and has attempted in every direction to follow the tenets of the Zoroastrian faith. His charity as we have seen is boundless, subjected to no rigid distinction of caste or creed but poured forth like the blessings of Heaven on all mankind. It places him among that shining galaxy of men like Edison, Rockfeller, Lord Nuffield and Henry Ford whose wealth seems to have been given them to benefit humanity. Of Sir Hormusjee it might be truly said that "his left hand doth not know what his right hand giveth" for he does believe in quiet and unostentatious generosity without the blare and fanfare of cheap publicity.

As Consul for Portugal and Austria he has been brought into intimate personal contact with European life and character and his deep-seated faith in and respect for the latter has always been one of the guiding principles of his life. Whenever he has discovered a just cause needing assistance he has always tried to help. There has never been a single deserving suppliant who has left his presence empty handed. Looking backwards over activities extending through seven decades of ceaseless effort, Sir Hormusjee can reflect that sucess has attended upon every project to which he has lent his talents and his personality. It matters not if the object of his generosity has been some poor dispensary, a



Sir Hormusjee and the members of his family at the palatial residence of the Sultan of Lahej.

starving, unendowed hospital or orphanage, a widows' home or children's creche, the purse of this merchant prince has ever been open to aid; the business acumen that has brought success to every undertaking has also been available to give future stability and security to scores of Bombay's eleemosynary institutions. "He who gives to the poor lends to God", here is a precept that has guided this great and generous heart throughout a career lasting for three quarters of a century.

Sir Hormusjee is not merely a Parsee or an Indian or an Asiatic but a citizen of the world. His contribution to the welfare of humanity has been great and the scope of his activities far-flung, far-reaching and international in character. Exhaustive travel throughout the world has given to this gentle Knight a broad sympathy with suffering humanity that has ever transcended mere territorial boundaries. Here is the true international, the type that must eventually salvage civilization despite the sabre-rattling of those ephemeral monstrosities that to-day are wrecking Europe. Ex Oriente lux! How true this maxim reads to-day. It may be that once again the East will save humanity by example. And, surely, when that momentous day bursts upon history, the splendid life and generous compassion of this great leader will give inspiration and cheer to a world in distress.

It is a joyful fact that his public service and his charity have been recognised by the Parsee community—the British Government and other com-

munities in India. If any man has deserved the public honour conferred upon him that man is Sir Hormusjee and we hope and trust that honour will continue for generations to come to brighten the lives of his descendants.

"He that has pride of ancestry has hope of progeny." Fortunately in the case of Sir Hormusjee this honoured name is certain of perpetuation. The honours so liberally bestowed by the King Emperor have been entirely unsought. It is not improper, indeed it is eminently appropriate to express the hope that, in the near future, those honours and that well-deserved title should be made hereditary. A century and more of distinguished and unselfish service has been given by this family, not to India alone but to the grander ideal of international comity and commerce. It is in such realms of effort and enterprise that Sir Hormusjee has ungrudgingly laboured through a long and honourable life. That the family tradition will be maintained is happily certain. It is not improper to express a hope that honours garnered in the far-flung empire of commerce will likewise be perpetrated.

Consistent with his other great qualities of heart and soul is his belief in the sacredness not only of human life but that of the Almighty's dumb creation. "Mercy has found a haven in his soul" and informs the minutest deed he undertakes. To all those institutions which are devoted to the care of animals especially the sacred cow he has donated

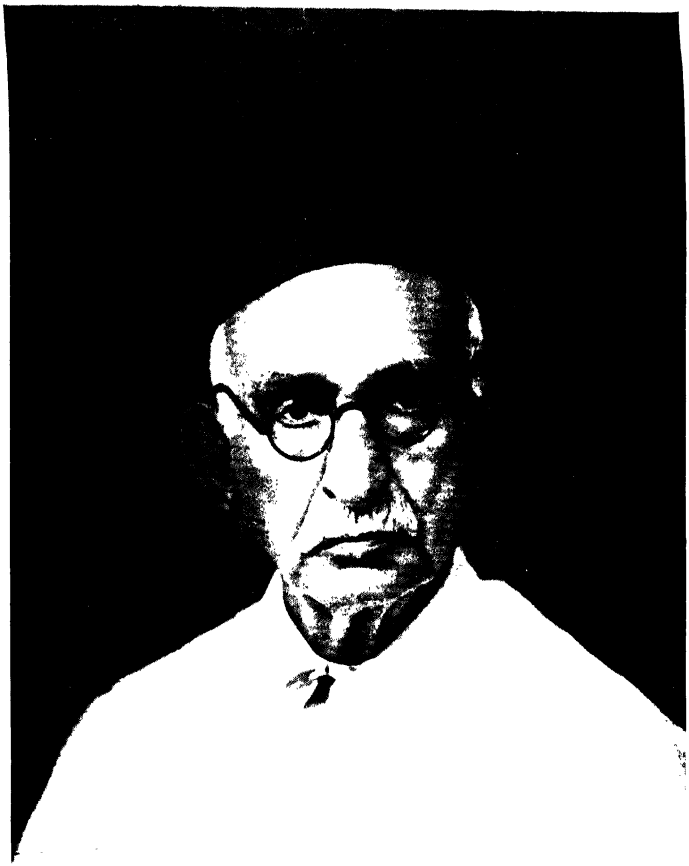
large sums and worked for their improvement. Considering the body as important as the mind he has financed numberless physical culture institutions as well as hospitals to relieve the suffering of diseased and distressed humanity.

One can say in conclusion that Sir Hormusjee's life has been like a dome of many coloured glasses tinting with a rich radiance all those whom he has met. As the late Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji was considered the Grand Old Man of India in the political field, in the commercial world Sir Hormusjee fully deserves that title. There is much that is common between the two; age, achievement, modesty, singleness of purpose and love of humanity. His very existence has been beneficial to all mankind and has been informed by an almost divine love of humanity. We hope and pray that Almighty God in His infinite mercy might give him a long lease of life and grant him all the happiness he has so richly deserved.

EPILOGUE

SIR HORMUSJEE is a leader of great glory and dynamic force in the Parsee community. Parsee race, Parsee name, Parsee religion, Zoroastrian traditions and Iranian history: all are full of lustre due to his magnanimity, sincerity and universal ideal of brotherhood.

Sir Hormusjee has not founded or organised an Empire like glorious Jamshyd or Hushang Peshdad, Kaikus and Kaikhushroo the Kaiyan, Cyaxares the Great of Media, and Ardeshir, Shapoor and Behram of the Sassanids etc; nor has he achieved any heroic deeds like the king-makers Kereshasp, Jal-o-Sam, Rustum and Behram Chaubin. Sir Hormusjee has not thundered the House of Commons like the grand old man Dr. Dadabhoy Nowroji or Mr. Shapurji D. Saklatwalla by his matchless eloquence; Sir Hormusjee has not immortalised his name by writing anything like the world-famous voluminous works,—the Holy Zend Avesta or the immortal, inimitable epic of the *Shah Nameh.* Sir Hormusjee is neither an *alumni* of the world famous Universities of Oxford, Cambridge or London; nor is he a guiding post of a Court of Justices or of a public platform that would resound to his glory. Sir Hormusjee has not made his mark as a humanitarian, politician, statesman, poet, legal



Sir Hormusjee C. Dinshaw,
Kt., O.B.E., M.V.O.

luminary or economist like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Dadabhoy, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Mulla or Sir Dinshaw Watchchha respectively; nor has he achieved any extraordinary records in other lines of speculative business, erudition or sports; nor has Sir Hormusjee made a name in cricket, tennis, physical feats, aerial flights, or speed records; nor are there any processions in his honour, nor do his photos placarded in public or daily journals, nor do acclamations given to his name by teeming millions of India: Yet, despite all these Sir Hormusjee is a magnificent, great and majestic soul, charitable, liberal-minded one and invincible. He is an entity to be respected, worshipped and held up as an ideal to be followed;—why so?

Sir Hormusjee is surely great. The majesty of his entity is to be gauged in his all-pervading cosmopolitan fellow-feeling and universal brotherhood. It is centred in soul fraternity. He is as well of extensive ideals, all-comprehensive in compassion. Great as he is, he is selfless in the service of humanity in general without fuss or noise, in silent but progressive acts and deeds. He is grand and imposing because of lavish charities mingled with simplicity of habits of life, merged in sublimity of ideas, chastity of motives, honesty of purpose allied to gentility of grace, of manners in the dignity of work where he shows to the fullest extent the frankness of heart with courage of convictions emanating from his guileless walk of life and outspokenness with decency. Sir Hormusjée enjoys a unique and

peculiar position amongst the outstanding living Parsee stalwarts. If ever there is the divine in man, it is in Sir Hormusjee. His very appearance inspires reverence. I have the rare good fortune of knowing Sir Hormusjee Cowasjee Dinshaw at close quarters in his extreme old age and a gentler, kindlier, more hospitable, more sympathetic and more charitable soul I have never met. Sir Hormusjee is an institution in himself. Long live Sir Hormusjee for the benefit of the Parsee community in particular and the sister communities of India in general!

APPENDIX A.

SIR HORMUSJEE COWASJI DINSHAW, Kt., M.V.O., O.B.E.

(An Appreciation)

A Revered Elder of the Parsee Community

This fascinating account of the life of the most revered elder of the Parsee community will be read with profound interest and much information by an appreciative public. Sir Hormusjee is almost the last of that old school of elders who were the real benefactors and helpers of the community in all circumstances of life. They lived in the midst of their communal people and no aloofness stood between the two in those happy old days.

Sir Hormusjee is without doubt almost the last of such esteemed elders; because, although the community has the good fortune of still having a fair number of esteemable and sympathetic elders, these have grown up quite as a new class and lived in an air of aloofness from the community, which has led to the bond which united them being weakened to a very great extent. This has also resulted in the community growing up without the elevating influence of the dignity of life in which these elders lived in their midst and before their eyes. The evil results of this are visible in the present day state of the Parsees.

A Capable and Talented Biographer

This highly interesting and inspiring biography of Sir Hormusjee is written by a young cultured Hindu gentleman, and every line of his writing breathes of an almost

affectionate veneration for the subject of his theme, of an admiring love for his community, of a genuine glorification of their great past and of a worshipful regard for their ancient and noble faith.

It bespeaks tons of merit in Sir Hormusjee to inspire his biographer in so high a way; and all who know Sir Hormusjee intimately will endorse that view without the smallest hesitation. The great sincerity of purpose with which Mr. Joshi writes, does honour both to himself and to the subjects on which he writes. It is a great good fortune that such a sincere and capable writer is found amidst our Hindu brothers to write on a great Parsee, his community and his faith. Some five months ago he had published a short account of Sir Hormusjee's life; and it is a rare instance of a biography being sold off within the brief space of five months and a revised and enlarged edition being called out at its end ! Mr. Joshi deserves great credit for having brought out so soon so substantial and informing a work as even a casual reader finds this account of a great life to be.

His Clear, Comprehensive and Fascinating Work

In this account are cleverly and imperceptibly interwoven some very unique chapters: India of the days when Sir Hormusjee was born; the Immigration of the Parsees into India and their growing share in the country's public life and modern growth; a clever exposition of the Iran movement in the chapter on "Sir Hormusjee and Iran"; and vivid sketches of Sir Hormusjee's political views, his general views on life, his great charities, and the excellences of his character.

Sir Hormusjee Born in an Eventful Epoch
The Great Achievement of the British Rule in India

Sir Hormusjee was born in 1857, a year so eventful in the history of India, out of which the nation emerged with

a mixed feeling of anxiety and hopes of the future. We all know what the future has been: a future punctuated with a steady intellectual, economical and industrial growth beside which also grew up a united and mutually understanding nation though really constituted of diverse elements speaking a multitude of languages not always understood outside their individual circles. National sentimentalism sometimes blurs people's clear vision when the vastness of these blessings of British rule in India is overlooked. That is no doubt due to the growing self-consciousness of a people awakening to a sense of greatness and might pulsating in their teeming millions, forgetting at the same time that were it not for that great rule India might still be divided and constituted of diverse and quarrelling peoples, between whom there was hardly a ground of common interests before.

Mr. Joshi's Clear Vision and Unblurred Opinion

Mr. Joshi has drawn a fascinating picture of this eventful era coinciding with the life of the great Parsee he has set himself to describe in this handsome volume. It is a high proof of his great talent and clear vision that Mr. Joshi sees and expounds the vast difference between India of 1857 and India of to-day. He has also clearly sketched the great share of the Parsee community in moulding this proud present out of that gloomy past.

The Builders of a Great House

In describing the family history of Sir Hormusjee, Mr. Joshi has shown how out of small beginnings Seth Cowasji Dinshaw and his son Sir Hormusjee built up the great fortunes of the Adenwalla family and with them the growth and prosperity of the Aden colony. Both father and son have been the makers of modern Aden, and in functioning as such they have built up also their own great trading house highly respected in all neighbouring Arabia and in

the whole of north-east Africa, and in Bombay. The great house of Cowasji Dinshaw & Sons is universally recognised as the leading business people and citizens of Aden, both by the vastness of their undertakings and by the great benefits bestowed by them on the colony for the whole length of the past century.

Their Race and Its Doings and Interests

The chapter on the history of the Parsees, their immigration into India, and their life in it ever since, is written with equal eloquence, and provides an arresting reading for all perusers. So also is the chapter describing conditions in Iran and the Parsees' interest in that ancient and promising country and its great and intellectual people.

A Work Every Indian and Parsee should read from End to End

We have little doubt that this excellent work will provide highly profiting and elevating reading to all Indians irrespectively of caste and creed; for it not only describes an exemplary life of one who is as great an Indian as he is a Parsee, but also imparts a most valuable knowledge of the present and past of a great and highly interesting community of India, and of the whole Indian life associated with them. In any case no Parsee home should be without a copy of this valued work which is bound to provide an inspiring reading both for the young and the old in it.

S. J. Bulsara, M.A.

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